

A COMPANION TO ALFRED THE GREAT



Edited by

NICOLE GUENTHER DISCENZA
& PAUL E. SZARMACH

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A Companion to Alfred the Great

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Nicole Guenther Discenza and Paul E. Szarmach

June 2014

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Abbreviations and Short Titles

(for full references, see Bibliography)

ASC	Anglo-Saxon Chronicle
ASCCE	The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition
ASE	<i>Anglo-Saxon England</i>
ASPR	<i>Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records</i> , ed. Krapp and Dobbie
BEASE	<i>Blackwell Encyclopedia of Anglo-Saxon England</i>
BL	British Library
BnF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris
<i>Boethius</i>	<i>The Old English Boethius</i> , ed. Godden and Irvine
Bosworth-Toller	<i>An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary...</i> Joseph Bosworth, ed. Toller
CH I	<i>Ælfric's Catholic Homilies</i> , First Series, ed. Clemons
CH II	<i>Ælfric's Catholic Homilies</i> , Second Series, ed. Godden
CCCC	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
CSASE	Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
CUL	Cambridge, University Library
DCP	Boethius, <i>De consolatione philosophiae</i> , ed. Bieler
<i>Dialogi</i>	Grégoire le Grand, <i>Dialogues</i> , ed. Adalbert de Vogüé
DOE	<i>Dictionary of Old English</i> , ed. Cameron <i>et al.</i>
EEMF	Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile
EETS	Early English Text Society
EHD	Whitelock, <i>English Historical Documents</i>
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
EME	<i>Early Medieval Europe</i>
ES	<i>English Studies</i>
Gneuss	Gneuss, <i>Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts</i>
<i>Fontes</i>	<i>Fontes Anglo-Saxonici</i>
HE	<i>Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i> , ed. and trans. Colgrave and Mynors
JEGP	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
Ker, <i>Catalogue</i>	N.R. Ker, <i>Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon</i>
K&L	Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (eds. and trans.), <i>Alfred the Great</i>
LS	<i>Ælfric's Lives of Saints</i> , ed. Skeat
LSE	<i>Leeds Studies in English</i>

<i>MEC</i>	Philip Grierson and Mark Blackburn, <i>Medieval European Coinage</i>
<i>MGH</i>	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
<i>MLN</i>	<i>Modern Language Notes</i>
MS(s)	manuscript(s)
n.s.	new series
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> , ed. H.G.C. Matthew and Brian Harrison
OE	Old English
<i>OEGD</i>	<i>Bischof Wærferths von Worcester Übersetzung der Dialoge Gregors des Grossen</i> , ed. Hecht
<i>OEHE</i>	<i>The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History</i> , ed. Miller
<i>OEN</i>	<i>Old English Newsletter</i>
os	original series
<i>Orosius</i>	<i>The Old English Orosius</i> , ed. Bately
<i>PC</i>	<i>King Alfred's West Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care</i> , ed. Sweet
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina</i> , ed. J.P. Migne
<i>Psalms</i>	<i>King Alfred's Old English Psalms</i> , ed. O'Neill
<i>RP</i>	<i>Regula pastoralis</i> : Grégoire le Grand, <i>Règle Pastorale</i> , ed. Bruno Judic, Charles Morel, Floribert Rommel
S [number]	P.H. Sawyer, <i>Anglo-Saxon Charters</i> [number of charter]
ss	Supplementary Series
<i>WB-EnASE</i>	<i>The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Anglo-Saxon England</i> , ed. Michael Lapidge, John Blair, Simon Keynes and Donald Scragg, 2nd ed.

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numerous articles on Anglo-Saxon art and artefacts, and edited several volumes of essays; her most recent monographs include *Anglo-Saxon Art: a New History* (Cornell University Press), and *The Franks Casket* (British Museum Press) both published in 2012. Her 2011 Brixworth Lecture, *From Wall-paintings to Altar-cloths: Furnishing the Anglo-Saxon Church*, will be published later in 2015.

Introduction

This *Companion to Alfred* seeks both to guide readers through the field and add new scholarship in the study of Alfred, his times, and the artistic and literary productions associated with the king and his court. Fresh editions of crucial texts have appeared in this new millennium: Patrick P. O'Neill provided the first edition with full introduction and notes to the Prose Psalms, while Carolin Schreiber's partial edition of the *Pastoral Care* offered a new look at the text.¹ Malcolm Godden and Susan Irvine's edition of the *Boethius* made the prose-only text and the prosimetrum available separately and superseded all previous editions, both full and partial.² Rolf Bremmer and David Johnson are currently editing Wærferth's translation of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, and Sharon Rowley and Gregory Waite have undertaken an edition of the *Old English Historia Ecclesiastica*.³ Significant new studies have also appeared recently, including collections of papers on Alfred and his circle, book-length studies, and major articles.⁴

- 1 *King Alfred's Old English Prose Translation of the First Fifty Psalms*, Medieval Academy Books 104 (Cambridge, MA: 2001); *King Alfred's Old English Translation of Pope Gregory the Great's "Regula Pastoralis" and Its Cultural Context*, Münchener Universitätschriften 25 (Bern, Frankfurt am Main, and New York: 2002).
- 2 *The Old English Boethius: An Edition of the Old English Versions of Boethius's De Consolatione Philosophiae*, ed. Malcolm Godden and Susan Irvine with Mark Griffith and Rohini Jayatilaka, 2 vols. (Oxford, 2009); see below, 201–205 for the two different texts of the *Boethius*.
- 3 For Bremmer and Johnson, see Johnson's chapter, below, note 23. For Rowley and Waite, see Sharon M. Rowley, *The Old English Version of Bede's "Historia ecclesiastica,"* Anglo-Saxon Studies 16 (Woodbridge and Rochester, NY: 2011), 28, note 50.
- 4 See particularly: Timothy Reuter (ed.), *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences*, Studies in Early Medieval Britain (Aldershot, Hants, and Burlington, VT: 2003); Janet Bately and Anton Englert (eds.), *Ohthere's Voyages: A Late 9th-Century Account of Voyages along the Coasts of Norway and Denmark and Its Cultural Context*, Maritime Culture of the North 1 (Roskilde: 2007); and Anton Englert and Athena Trakadas (eds.), *Wulfstan's Voyage: The Baltic Sea Region in the Early Viking Age as Seen from Shipboard*, Maritime Culture of the North 2 (Roskilde: 2009). Many other collections have one or more items on Alfred. Monographs on Alfred and his circle since 2000 (not counting popular surveys or biographies) include: Anton Scharer, *Herrschaft und Repräsentation: Studien zur Hofkultur König Alfreds des Grossen*, Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung, suppl. 36 (Vienna and Munich: 2000); Nicole Guenther Discenza, *The King's English: Strategies of Translation in the Old English Boethius* (Albany, NY: 2005); David Pratt, *The Political Thought of King Alfred the Great*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Fourth Series 67 (Cambridge, 2007); and Rowley, *The Old English Version* (though Rowley

While a few volumes in the series Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition deal with specific topics, most concentrate upon a specific author. *A Companion to Alfred the Great* diverges from this pattern by focusing on a central figure who did not write all the texts discussed and is now thought by some scholars not to have authored any of them. Several of the earliest known prose works in Old English are associated with the king, and five of them bear his name: he is said to have translated the *Pastoral Care*, *Boethius*, *Soliloquies*, and Prose Psalms of the Paris Psalter; and to have authored the Preface to the Laws of Ine and Alfred and compiled those laws.⁵ Other works associated with Alfred are the Old English *Orosius*, which was translated anonymously but includes interpolations of two interviews with travelers to the court of King Alfred, at least one of them supposedly by the king himself; the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, whose first recension was compiled in Alfred's kingdom during his reign, possibly with encouragement from the king; Wærferth's translation of Gregory the Great's *Dialogi* into Old English, which begins with a preface in Alfred's name; and perhaps the Old English version of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*.

Debates about Alfred's authorship generally remain traditional. Michel Foucault notes that Jerome had four criteria for establishing authorship: consistent merit, consistent doctrine, consistent style, and historical consistency.⁶ Recent studies of Alfred's authorship tend to focus on the third criterion: they posit that each author has an individual style, and that that style can be analyzed and identified to determine if two or more works are by the same author.⁷

argues against connecting the *OEHE* to Alfred's circle). Major articles are too numerous to list here, but many appear in the bibliography to this volume and its appendix on authorship.

5 See Janet Bately's Chapter 4 in this book for Alfredian authorship of all but the body of the laws, and Mary Richards's Chapter 10 for Alfred's work on the laws.

6 Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" trans. by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. by Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca, NY: 1977), 113–138, at 128.

7 The other three criteria appear in some studies as well, but much less often. While Malcolm Godden argues that the value, theology, and philosophy of the *Boethius* and the *Soliloquies* set them apart from the OE *Pastoral Care* (see particularly "The Alfredian Project and its Aftermath: Rethinking the Literary History of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries." Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture, 15 January 2009. *Proceedings of the British Academy* 162 [2009]: 93–122), other scholars argue that different source texts and different goals yielded different approaches and results in the different translations; see Janet M. Bately, "Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything? The Integrity of the Alfredian Canon Revisited," *Medium Ævum* 78 (2009): 189–215. Jerome and Foucault treat authorship of source texts, of course. Using the same criteria to treat translations can be problematic, because source texts by different authors already vary in quality, teaching, style, and the historical situation of the author.

Appendix A in this volume offers an overview of the growing literature in the field, including both old and new contributions.

Alfred the Great's role in various accomplishments and texts can be hard to discern, and it may not always conform to modern understandings of the author. If we adopt Michel Foucault's idea of the author-function, however, we may gain a broader understanding of Alfred. The designation of "Alfred" allows us to group certain texts together and place others outside the group, as Foucault notes the name of the author does. At a minimum, the fact that a number of texts were attached to a single name implies that relationships of homogeneity, filiation, reciprocal explanation, authentication, or of common utilization were established among them. Finally, the author's name characterizes a particular manner of existence of discourse. Discourse that possesses an author's name is not to be immediately consumed and forgotten; neither is it accorded the momentary attention given to ordinary, fleeting words. Rather, its status and its matter of reception are regulated by the culture in which it circulates.⁸

We may argue about whether the youngest son of Æthelwulf of Wessex sat down with Latin texts himself and dictated Old English texts, was one member of a committee that translated such texts, simply gave his approval to works rendered by courtiers, or was in fact dead by the time some or most of these texts were completed. Yet centuries of tradition have put the name Alfred the Great on them. We still alter and add to that tradition as we move works from the category "translated by Alfred himself" to "translated with Alfred's sponsorship" (as with the Old English *Orosius*), or from "translated by Alfred himself" to "may or may not have been translated with Alfred's sponsorship" (as with the Old English *Bede*). We still ponder how deeply Alfred was personally involved with the *Pastoral Care* or the Preface to the Laws. At the same time, the notion that Alfred wrote, translated, or at least oversaw some texts, and stood sponsor to others, has helped scholars illuminate both history and texts.⁹

Another point by Foucault might apply more directly to translations: "The author is also the principle of a certain unity of writing—all differences having to be resolved, at least in part, by the principles of evolution, maturation, or influence. The author also serves to neutralize the contradictions that may emerge in a series of texts" ("What Is an Author?" 128). Both Godden and Bately, and other scholars as well, ask whether differences are indeed resolved in translation, and to what extent they come from different influences.

8 "What Is an Author?" 123.

9 It is also true that taking Alfred as author and sponsor can close other lines of inquiry. Scholars who reject or question Alfred's role as author and sponsor have been productive along different lines. See, for example, Malcolm Godden's recent work, from "Did King Alfred Write Anything?" *Medium Ævum* 76 (2007): 1–23, and "King and Counselor in the Alfredian

We may find it useful to think of “Alfred” as an author function more than a biographical description.

A growing body of scholarship on Alfred the Great and his circle over the past two decades reflects the importance of the intellectual and literary work ascribed to him and to his sponsorship as well as the significance of political, military, and artistic work of his era.¹⁰ Modern scholars are not the only ones to ascribe such significance to Alfred. Scribes who copied the works, other writers such as Ælfric, and historians such as William of Malmesbury associated multiple texts with Alfred, which indicates the perceived centrality of Alfred’s court to early English artistic and literary life, a perception that remained for centuries after Alfred’s death.¹¹

Some of the contributors to this volume engage directly the problems of authorship, authorial voice, and how the texts situate themselves with regard to Alfred. Janet M. Batelly’s chapter “Alfred as Author and Translator” makes a case for Alfred’s direct role in the four more literary works now conventionally ascribed to him (leaving aside the laws). Susan Irvine’s “Alfredian Prefaces and

Boethius,” in *Intertexts: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture Presented to Paul E. Szarmach*, ed. Virginia Blanton and Helene Scheck (Tempe, AZ: 2008), 191–208; to “Prologues and Epilogues in the Old English *Pastoral Care*, and Their Carolingian Models,” *JEGP* 110 (2011): 441–473. Similarly, Sharon M. Rowley’s monograph, which links the Old English *Historia ecclesiastica* to other venues: *The Old English Version of Bede’s “Historia ecclesiastica”* Anglo-Saxon Studies 16 (Woodbridge, Eng., and Rochester, NY: 2011). See the Appendix on Authorship and the bibliography for more references.

10 The journal *Anglo-Saxon England* published its first bibliography in 1972, covering items published in 1971. That first one presented an unusual ratio of Alfred-related items: six of the twelve had to do with texts associated with the king and his circle. The next two years brought a more typical distribution: the second bibliography had seventeen items in prose with three on works with Alfredian connections, and the third had twelve items, of which three were Alfredian. By contrast, the heading “Alfred (and Circle)” had on average 20 of 92 items over each of the three most recent years of the bibliography (2008–10); that count does not include the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which has its own category and averaged eight per year. Scholarship on Alfred and his era has not grown as much in other disciplines. In the first three years of *ASE*’s bibliography, history had an average of 43 items per year; two years saw one item on Alfred, and one saw none. History now exceeds a hundred items annually and is broken into several smaller categories, but Alfred and Asser together only receive one to three items a year. As in history, the areas of sculpture and metalwork have grown considerably with no corresponding upsurge in interest in Alfredian-era art.

11 The perception remained for over a millennium; see Simon Keynes, “The Cult of King Alfred the Great,” *Anglo-Saxon England* 28 (1999): 225–356; and Joanne Parker, “*England’s Darling*”: *The Victorian Cult of Alfred the Great* (Manchester and New York: 2007).

Epilogues” takes a different approach, studying the traditions engaged by the prefaces and epilogues across a range of works and authors and the cultural and literary work they performed: “They contribute to our sense of the powerful presence of Alfred himself in the development of a tradition of writing in English, through their determination to associate the works with the king as author or commissioner. They shed light on the way in which different voices might be exploited to convey a variety of ideas and perspectives” (169). Irvine also considers the production and early circulation of “The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,” a work that lacks an “author” in the most traditional sense.

Several of the authors in this volume also examine manuscript contexts, illuminating reception and transmission—the work of scribes and readers as they contribute to the text. We have no autographs for these texts; the manuscripts we possess come not from the hand of the translator or author but from copyists, most of them working from previous copies and not from dictation or the autograph itself. These other hands both enrich and complicate our understanding of each text. Modern scholars typically read the Old English *Soliloquies* either for its preface or as a whole, but in “Augustine’s *Soliloquia* in Old English,” Paul E. Szarmach shows an alternative tradition in which what is known as “Augustine’s prayer” travels separately, and one manuscript preserves part of this prayer in Old English without the context of the broader work. David Johnson explores the popularity of the Old English version of Gregory’s *Dialogues* and the Old English *Historia ecclesiastica* in his “Alfredian Apocrypha: the Old English *Dialogues* and *Bede*,” while Nicole Guenther Discenza concludes her study of “*Boethius*” with glimpses of how later authors themselves adapted the Old English text.

While authorship forms one theme of this volume and the afterlife of works another, a third examines the prehistory: sources for Alfredian thought. Simon Keynes lays out the historical context for Alfred’s rule and his program. Rosalind Love examines a special case in “Latin Commentaries on Boethius’s *Consolation of Philosophy*.” Leslie Webster sheds light on models for “The Art of Alfred and His Times.” Understanding the work of a writer, artist, or translator requires not only recognizing the sources but also exploring how sources are altered and adapted, whether it is the dynamic use of introductions to the Psalms in Patrick O’Neill’s “Prose Psalms of the Paris Psalter” or the careful reworking of multiple codes in “The Laws of Alfred and Ine” by Mary Richards. Carolin Schreiber looks closely at translation techniques in “*Searoðonca Hord*: Alfred’s Translation of Gregory the Great’s *Regula Pastoralis*,” showing that even what is generally considered a close translation rewards a careful examination of method, while Janet M. Bately’s “*Orosius*” analyzes the style and authorial voice of that rendering.

Though these chapters have common threads, each chapter in this volume makes a distinct contribution. The first section establishes contexts for Alfred and his works. Simon Keynes traces the roots of “Alfred the Great and the Kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons” in the southern English kingdoms of the 840s through the 860s before he examines Alfred’s own reign, with special attention to coinage. Numismatic evidence shows cooperation between Wessex and Mercia even during the first Viking invasion of Wessex in 870 or 871. Alfred successfully fought off the Vikings at Edington in 878, which evidently helped him extend his power over Mercia. His power also appears in Alfred’s treaty with Guthrum and Alfred’s law code. Keynes shows Alfred establishing himself not only as King of Wessex but also as King of the Anglo-Saxons, a development Keynes again traces in the coinages before turning to Alfred’s educational program. Keynes concludes that Alfred established a model for an enlarged Anglo-Saxon kingdom after his death.

Leslie Webster introduces “The Art of Alfred and His Times.” She examines Continental contacts and influences, both in Francia and in Rome, with particular attention to specific objects that Alfred or members of his court might have seen. She then turns to close examinations of the Alfred, Minster Lovell, and Warminster Jewels, the Fuller Brooch, and several fittings from the same period, demonstrating their debts to the past, their innovations, and their connections to Alfredian literature. Webster also explores a fragment of wall-painting, contrasting its “confident” style with the more traditional decoration of the few illuminated manuscripts that survive. In closing, Webster looks to the influence of these works on subsequent art.

Rosalind Love rounds out the section with “Latin Commentaries on Boethius’s *Consolation of Philosophy*.” She examines the origins of glosses on the *Consolation*—a text that by 850 if not earlier traveled almost invariably with explanatory and sometimes interpretive glosses. Older attempts to identify individual authors of glosses inevitably faltered because the traditions are too complex. Love presents instead a picture of a rich tradition developing through many minds and hands. The Old English *Boethius* draws upon these traditions of annotations, though they are mostly available to us in copies that may postdate the translation. Love shows some likely uses of specific glosses in the *Boethius* and closes with a consideration of the intellectual setting that produced glossed texts and the *Boethius* itself.

The second section of this volume concerns the works that many current scholars credit to Alfred. Janet M. Bately opens this portion with “Alfred as Author and Translator,” concentrating on the literary translations often attributed to Alfred: the *Pastoral Care*, the *Boethius*, the *Soliloquies*, and the Prose Psalms of the Paris Psalter. She responds to historical, syntactical, and lexical

arguments that Alfred could not have translated the texts himself. Bately shows agreements in diction, style, and methods of translation, concluding that we can rely upon the depiction of Alfred as translator in the Preface to *The Pastoral Care*.

Next, Susan Irvine examines “Alfredian Prefaces and Epilogues” in light of the traditions of Latin prefaces and epilogues upon which Alfred and his helpers drew. She treats the prefaces and epilogues to the OE *Dialogues*, *Pastoral Care*, *Boethius*, *Soliloquies*, *Laws*, and the CCCC 41 manuscript of Bede’s *History*, in relation both to each other and to the texts they accompany. Different strategies and voices lend authority to the frames and the texts they enclose. Irvine uses Gérard Genette’s notion of “paratext” to understand how these frame-pieces work in manuscripts and in printed texts.

Each of the following chapters in the section engage an individual work, beginning with Carolin Schreiber’s “*Searoðonca Hord*: Alfred’s Translation of Gregory the Great’s *Regula Pastoralis*.” The Preface to the *Pastoral Care* has dominated scholarship, receiving far more attention than the long translation itself. Schreiber considers the Latin source text, the surviving OE manuscripts, and philological studies of the *Pastoral Care*. She analyzes Alfred’s techniques of translation, showing a confident translator taking a practical approach to making the work of Gregory the Great more available. Schreiber examines the earlier history of the *Regula pastoralis* in England and on the Continent and finds it to be a key influence on Alfred’s thought and program.

Nicole Guenther Discenza’s chapter on the “*Boethius*” begins by noting that one extant manuscript presents a prose text and the other a prosimetrum, each drawing on a different tradition and each producing a different experience for the reader. Yet they also share much. Both retain the dialogue structure of the Latin text, and both make action and characterization more vivid than the source text. The *Boethius* presents both practical and theoretical philosophy. Unlike the Latin, the Old English text constructs careful hierarchies of goods (from earthly to heavenly) and entities (heavier versus lighter elements, demons and angels). Where the Latin text seems to discard everything but God by the end, the OE makes a space for lower goods. The chapter’s conclusion touches on later uses of the *Boethius*.

Paul E. Szarmach’s chapter on the “*Soliloquies*” treats the manuscript evidence in detail, calling attention to its possible use as a devotional text. The Old English text draws upon sources beyond Augustine’s *Soliloquia* to add a third book, yet it continues to follow Augustinian lines, including an interest in friendship. Szarmach’s close reading of Augustine’s prayer, which circulated apart from the Latin and OE texts, puts the *Soliloquies* into a devotional context. He finds metaphor a distinguishing characteristic both of the original OE

prologue and the translated text. He considers the evidence that the *Boethius* and the *Soliloquies* shared an author; both texts venture into philosophical speculation in the vernacular. Szarmach concludes that this philosophical text, lacking the glossing tradition of the *Consolation*, provides even more of a challenge, creating a new text of English philosophy.

In “Alfred’s Prose Translation of Psalms 1–50,” Patrick P. O’Neill traces the sources of the paraphrase and its layered historical introductions. Those introductions combine allegorical and moral levels popular in the West with a particularly Irish brand of fourfold interpretation that gave two historical readings to each Psalm. O’Neill suggests that a single Hiberno-Latin Psalter commentary brought together multiple sources for the translator, who then reinterpreted the commentary pragmatically. The translator emphasizes the moral level over the usually more prominent allegorical one, suggesting a lay target audience.

Mary P. Richards begins her study of “The Laws of Alfred and Ine” with detailed study of the manuscripts. Format mattered to medieval readers and copyists of this text: a long preface authorizes the laws that follow, and from the earliest extant manuscript, chapter rubrics join Alfred’s laws and Ine’s, which are numbered sequentially. Later kings would position their own laws as supplements to this code. The Preface and the symbolic numbering of 120 sections (one for each year of Moses’s life) establish Moses as the model law-giver. Richards finds the code indebted to earlier laws, particularly those of Æthelberht of Kent. Alfred revised and reorganized Æthelberht’s laws, but he copied Ine’s code without changes, putting new matters or different penalties in his own laws instead. Richards concludes that *Alfred-Ine* came to represent royal authority and accomplishment and attracted other laws in later manuscripts.

The third section treats works not now credited directly to Alfred. Janet M. Bately leads with “*Orosius*,” attributed to Alfred by William of Malmesbury and by scholars into the mid-twentieth century. The chapter begins by briefly examining linguistic evidence for authorship: while evidence against Alfred’s authorship is strong, it does not support a conclusion that multiple translators were at work (although a Welsh speaker may have been involved in the copying at an early stage). Next, Bately considers how the translator adapted the source, particularly omissions and additions. Additions include comments attributed to “I, *Orosius*,” geographical information and other classical material not in the primary source text, and some errors. A discussion of translation style leads into a consideration of who the author may have been and when he worked. Bately concludes that though the *Orosius* could have been done after Alfred’s death, it fits Alfred’s program well and may have been done during his reign.

Susan Irvine considers the common stock of “The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle” to 890 and additional annals up to 896, concentrating on how the Chronicle dealt with political, historical, and literary concerns of the Age of Alfred. Sources and influences include the Royal Frankish annals. Irvine sees the Chronicle as participating in the forging of an English identity in Alfred’s reign, and she investigates linguistic and manuscript evidence for royal connections. She then examines several specific annals and groups of annals to show their relation to the work as a whole. The chapter ends with the ongoing production and influence of the Chronicle after Alfred’s death.

David Johnson ends the section with “Alfredian Apocrypha: The Old English *Dialogues* and *Bede*.” Both of these translations used to be firmly associated with Alfred. Wærferth’s translation of Gregory the Great’s *Dialogi* maintains its place in Alfred’s program, largely on the strength of prefaces that connect the work to the king, but the former near-consensus that Alfredian patronage lay behind the *Old English Historia Ecclesiastica* no longer exists. Johnson reviews the manuscript evidence for both translations and their source texts. Both works are Anglian and relatively close translations whose artistry and innovations have not always been appreciated. Johnson finds the evidence connecting the *OEHE* to Alfred’s program thin. He then turns to the reasons for translating each text and finally concludes that each had a significant afterlife.

The volume closes with an annotated bibliography on the topic of Alfred’s authorship giving particular attention to recent items.

Alfred the Great left us a legacy at once political, artistic, legal, religious, and literary. Over 1100 years after his death, scholars still strive to understand what went into his reign and what it left to generations to come. This volume aims to introduce new readers to the field and help experienced ones further their own work, as we follow in the tracks left for us by Alfred, his helpers, and his followers.

PART 1

Context



Alfred the Great and the Kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons

Simon Keynes

Although Alfred the Great has long enjoyed a high reputation, he remains at the centre of intense debate among historians and literary scholars alike. Much depends on a detailed understanding of political developments in the last quarter of the ninth century; much also depends on understanding of Alfred's programme for the revival of religion and learning. It would be impossible to achieve a consensus in such matters; but one should emphasize from the outset that Alfred's promotion of learning is inseparable from political developments in the 880s and early 890s, and that in combination these aspects of Alfred's reign are themselves inseparable from other aspects of Alfred's response to the Viking invasions.

From his accession in 871 to his death in 899 Alfred was known to himself, and perhaps also to most of his own people, as king "of the West Saxons." It is a sign of his aspirations and accomplishments, however, that in the 880s he came to be known, in certain quarters, as king "of the Anglo-Saxons," and it is a reflection of the esteem in which he had come to be held, by the early 890s, that he was described by a Welsh admirer, in 893, as ruler "of all the Christians of the island of Britain." The drift from one of these titles to another is of great significance, but of course it could not be regarded as a formal progression. In 871, at a time when the English people were under severe threat from hostile forces, Alfred became king of the extended kingdom of the West Saxons (reaching from Cornwall in the south-west to Sussex and Kent in the south-east). For the first ten years of his reign, from 871 until c. 880, he struggled hard against the invaders, known to the English of his day as "the heathens," "the Danes," or "the Vikings." In the aftermath of Alfred's victory over the Vikings at the battle of Edington (878), and the demise of Ceolwulf, king of the Mercians (c. 879), circumstances began to change. It was probably c. 880 that Alfred assumed or was accorded a new political identity, as a king whose authority now extended across the river Thames, northwards and westwards over what had come to be regarded as the "English" part of the recently divided kingdom of the Mercians; and it was as king of the Anglo-Saxons, so-called, that Alfred presided over a period of reform, reconstruction and regeneration. During the same period, his authority came to be recognized by some if not all of the rulers of the

Welsh, at least in the common struggle against a heathen enemy. In 892 the “great [Danish] army (*here*)” which had been active on the continent in the 880s crossed over to eastern Kent, and was soon joined by another. For more than three years Alfred’s extended kingdom was put to the test; but eventually, in the summer of 896, the Vikings dispersed. Relatively little is known of the last three years of Alfred’s reign, though he would appear to have been based by this stage at Winchester. He died on 28 October 899, described by a West Saxon chronicler as king “over the whole English people, except for that part which was under Danish rule.”¹

Alfred was already in his own lifetime to some extent a literary construction, whether in the annals of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, in the pages of Asser’s *Life of King Alfred*, or indeed in any of the other writings which emanated from his circle; and his reputation continued to flourish thereafter, reaching the next of several peaks during the period of renewed Viking invasions in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. It is only to be expected that those who told and retold his story exaggerated or manipulated the details for purposes of their own. First hailed as “the Great” at St Albans in the mid-thirteenth century, Alfred was given a leading role, in the seventeenth century, as the personification of all that a monarch should be, gaining further renown when embraced as the founder of the University of Oxford. He became a significant player in the politics of the eighteenth century, and was adopted latterly as a role model by George III. He achieved his apotheosis in the celebrations symbolized by the statues erected at Wantage in 1849 and at Winchester in 1901, commemorating, respectively, the 1000th anniversary of his birth and the supposed 1000th anniversary of his death.² Alfred “the Great” was dislodged long ago from the pedestal on which he once stood, in the sense that he is now far better understood than before; if he still seems to wobble, it is not least because the ground on which he stands has a tendency to move beneath his feet.

1 For the royal styles mentioned in this paragraph, among other styles, see Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge, *Alfred the Great: Asser’s “Life of King Alfred” and Other Contemporary Sources* (Harmondsworth: 1983), cited hereafter as K&L, *Alfred*, 67, 120, 164, 175, 179, 181, 182, 188 and 191.

2 Simon Keynes, “The Cult of King Alfred the Great,” *ASE* 28 (1999): 225–356, effectively summarized in one paragraph by Patrick Wormald, “Living with Alfred,” *Haskins Society Journal* 15 (2006): 1–39, at 1–2; Barbara Yorke, “Alfredism: The Use and Abuse of King Alfred’s Reputation in Later Centuries,” in *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences*, ed. Timothy Reuter, Studies in Early Medieval Britain (Aldershot: 2003), 361–380; David Horspool, *Why Alfred Burned the Cakes: A King and his Eleven-Hundred-Year Afterlife* (London: 2006); Joanne Parker, “England’s Darling”: *The Victorian Cult of Alfred the Great* (London: 2007).

The re-assessment of Alfred has been prompted in part by closer and more critical reading of the major literary and documentary sources, and in part by advances in the knowledge gained from other forms of evidence.³ The annals in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* provide a chronological framework which extends from Christ's birth to the late ninth century, culminating with the series of West Saxon kings from Ecgbert (802–839), and his son Æthelwulf (839–858), to Æthelwulf's sons Æthelbald (855–860), Æthelberht (860–865), Æthelred (865–871) and Alfred (871–899).⁴ The original compilation seems to have extended to the year 892, supplemented by a "continuation" which covers the years 893–896 and by annals forming part of a second continuation. The *Life of King Alfred* was addressed to the king by Asser, "lowest of all the servants of God."⁵ Its authenticity has been challenged in the past, but the consensus remains that the work was written in the year 893 by Asser, a priest who had come to Alfred's court, in the mid-880s, from the church of St David in south-west Wales.⁶ A text central to our understanding of Alfred's reign is the preface, cast in the form of a letter addressed by the king to each of his bishops, placed at the beginning of the Alfredian translation of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care*.⁷ The composition of a fondly imagined or more securely established "canon" of vernacular translations, considered at one time or another to be "Alfredian," in one sense or another, remains the subject of debate; so much so that the "Alfredian project" as a whole might seem to be crumbling.⁸ Other aspects of Alfred's rule are represented by his law-code, by the small surviving corpus of

3 K&L, *Alfred*; Richard Abels, *Alfred the Great* (London: 1998); the papers given at anniversary conferences in 1999, in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Timothy Reuter; P. Wormald, "Alfred," *ODNB*, vol. 1, 716–726; and David Pratt, *The Political Thought of King Alfred the Great* (Cambridge: 2007).

4 The annals in the *Chronicle* are cited below from *ASCCE*, 3: *MS A*, ed. Janet M. Bately (Cambridge: 1986), using the translation in *EHD*, 145–261 (no. 1).

5 Asser's *Life of King Alfred* is cited below from *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, ed. William Henry Stevenson, new impression, with contribution by Dorothy Whitelock (Oxford: 1959), using the translation in K&L, *Alfred*.

6 Most recently by Alfred P. Smyth, *King Alfred the Great* (Oxford: 1995). For a response to Smyth's case, see Simon Keynes, "On the Authenticity of Asser's *Life of King Alfred*," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 47 (1996): 529–551.

7 K&L, *Alfred*, 124–126 and 293–296; see also Simon Keynes, "The Power of the Written Word: Alfredian England 871–899," in *Alfred*, ed. Reuter, 175–197, at 193–196; and Irvine, Chapter 5, below.

8 Malcolm Godden, "Did King Alfred Write Anything?" *Medium Ævum* 76 (2007): 1–23; his "The Alfredian Project and its Aftermath: Rethinking the Literary History of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 162 (2009): 93–122; and his "Stories from the Court of King Alfred," in *Saints and Scholars: New Perspectives on Anglo-Saxon Literature and Culture in honour of Hugh Magennis*, ed. Stuart McWilliams (Cambridge: 2012), 123–140.

royal diplomas, in Latin, and by an even smaller number of vernacular charters, among them (and naturally of the utmost importance) the king's own will.⁹ The coinage of King Alfred, studied in its own right and also in relation to the coinage of the Mercians, bears on the nature of royal involvement in commerce, on the scale and control of commercial activity in London and elsewhere, and on wider political developments.¹⁰ Archaeology has contributed extensively to our understanding of the impact of the Viking invasions in the 870s, and of the measures taken to strengthen defenses in the 880s (in combination with the text known as the "Burghal Hidage"), not least at London.¹¹ A picture has also emerged of a very significant group of objects representing the work of craftsmen active in the second half of the ninth century, including a ring associated with King Æthelwulf, a ring associated with Queen Æthelswith, the Abingdon Sword, the Fuller Brooch, and a remarkable array of "unidentified socketed objects," most notably the Alfred Jewel.¹² The body of material available for the study of Alfred the Great is remarkable; and, appropriately enough, it has given rise to perceptions of the king himself of a kind which could not be contemplated for any other English ruler of the period.¹³

The Southern Kingdoms in the 840s, 850s and 860s

In the opening decades of the ninth century, the authority of the rulers of the Mercians had extended in one form or another not only over the western and

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- 9 For the Laws, see Richards, Chapter 10, below; for diplomas, Simon Keynes, "The West Saxon Charters of King Æthelwulf and his Sons," *EHR* 109 (1994): 1109–1149, at 1134–1141, and *A Conspectus of Anglo-Saxon Royal Diplomas, c. 850–1066*, Anglo-Saxon Charters ss 2 (Oxford: forthcoming); for Alfred's Will, S 1507, with K&L, *Alfred*, pp. 173–178, and map.
 - 10 R.H.M. Dolley and C.E. Blunt, "The Chronology of the Coins of Ælfred the Great 871–899," *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. R.H.M. Dolley (London: 1961), 77–95; *Kings, Currency and Alliances: History and Coinage of Southern England in the Ninth Century*, ed. Mark A.S. Blackburn and David N. Dumville (Woodbridge: 1998); and Mark Blackburn, "Alfred's Coinage Reforms," in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Reuter, 199–217.
 - 11 For further guidance, see *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, ed. Helena Hamerow, *et al.* (Oxford: 2011).
 - 12 Leslie Webster, "*Ædificia nova*: Treasures of Alfred's Reign," in *Alfred*, ed. Reuter, 79–103, and below, Chapter 2.
 - 13 Janet Nelson, "The Political Ideas of Alfred of Wessex," *Kings and Kingship in Medieval Europe*, ed. Anne Duggan (London: 1993), 125–158; David Pratt, "The Illnesses of King Alfred the Great," *ASE* 30 (2001): 39–90; Wormald, "Living with Alfred," 14–21; and esp. Pratt, *Political Thought*.

eastern midlands, between the river Thames and the river Humber, but also, and crucially, into the kingdom of the East Angles and south-eastwards into London, Essex, Surrey, Sussex, and Kent. The so-called “Mercian supremacy” disintegrated in the 820s, and henceforth the dominant figure south of the Humber was Ecgbert, king of the West Saxons (802–839). Ecgbert extended his power in the south-east, and his contribution to the making of the English kingdoms culminated in 838 with the important accord reached with Ceolnoth, archbishop of Canterbury (833–870), on the West Saxon royal estate at Kingston-upon-Thames.¹⁴

Ecgbert’s son Æthelwulf (839–858) presided over a bipartite kingdom comprising a western core and its eastern extension (not, it seems, including London), seemingly without any thought of merging the two parts into one.¹⁵ Perhaps there were differences between the western and eastern parts which would have made this difficult; more likely there was not yet the will. It is arguable at the same time that the West Saxon polity itself differed in certain ways from the Mercian polity, and that the differences might help to account for the respective fortunes of the West Saxons and the Mercians as the kingdoms of the southern English came under increasingly sustained attack from the Vikings.¹⁶ Whatever the case, there could be little doubt that Æthelwulf became the key player among the English in the troublous times of the mid-ninth century.¹⁷ He seems to have had little to fear from the Mercians, and makes a distinctive impression overall. The annals bearing on the Viking invasions (as seen from a later perspective) convey an impression of spirited resistance. In 853 Burgred, king of the Mercians (c. 852–874), sought help from Æthelwulf and the West Saxons in putting down an uprising among the Welsh; later that year he married Æthelwulf’s daughter, Æthelswith, on the royal estate at Chippenham in Wiltshire.¹⁸ In 854 Æthelwulf conveyed by charter a tenth part of his land throughout his kingdom “to the praise of God and his own eternal salvation.”¹⁹ In 855 he went to Rome, staying on the way home

14 S 1438, edited with discussion in *Charters of Christ Church Canterbury*, ed. N.P. Brooks and S.E. Kelly, 2 vols. (Oxford: 2013), 650–661 (no. 69).

15 Simon Keynes, “The Control of Kent in the Ninth Century,” *EME* 2 (1993): 111–131, at 124–128.

16 Simon Keynes, “Mercia and Wessex in the Ninth Century,” in *Mercia: an Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, ed. Michelle P. Brown and Carol A. Farr (London: 2001), 310–328.

17 J.L. Nelson, “Æthelwulf,” *ODNB*, i, 438–441.

18 ASC, s.a. 853; Asser, Chapters 7–9.

19 K&L, *Alfred*, 232–233, with Keynes, “West Saxon Charters,” 1119–1123, and *Charters of Malmesbury Abbey*, ed. S.E. Kelly (Oxford: 2005), 66–80 and 87–91.

with Charles the Bald, king of the West Franks. Soon after his return, in 856, Æthelwulf ordered to be set down in writing a statement of his wishes for the future of his composite kingdom.²⁰

An important aspect of Æthelwulf's legacy arose from his promotion of the West Saxon "alliance" with Mercia. Wessex was seemingly the more effective or adventurous of the two kingdoms in military terms, but its rulers had come to understand that in economic terms they should work together. An early stage in the process had been symbolized by the coinage minted for Ecgbert at London, c. 830, when he seems briefly to have taken control of the city, before it passed back to the Mercians.²¹ In the early 840s coinage of strikingly similar appearance had been issued by Æthelwulf of Wessex (from mints in Kent) and by Berhtwulf of Mercia (from London and perhaps elsewhere).²² In the 850s and early 860s moneyers in Kent struck distinctive coins in the name of Æthelwulf and then Æthelberht; but there was relatively little activity during the 850s at London for Burgred, until the inception of his substantial *Lunette* coinage, c. 860.²³ The clearest manifestation of the alliance in numismatic terms did not begin, therefore, until the mid-860s, when coins of the *Lunette* type (Plate 1.1, nos. 1–3) were minted not only for Burgred, at London, but also for Æthelred, in Kent; moreover, it seems that in addition to their output for Burgred, the moneyers in London minted a small number of coins of the same *Lunette* type for Æthelred (in the later 860s) and Alfred (in the early 870s).²⁴

20 For Æthelwulf's provisions, see Asser, Chapter 16, and Alfred's will (S 1507), with K&L, *Alfred*, 15–16, 236–237 and 314–316.

21 MEC, 292, with Rory Naismith, *The Coinage of Southern England 796–865*, 2 vols. (London: 2011), vol. 2, 19 (I.30–31).

22 MEC, 289–291 (Kent) and 292–293 (London). For a corpus of surviving coins, see Naismith, *Coinage 796–865*, vol. 2, 20–36 (London coinage of Berhtwulf) and 179–192 (Canterbury coinage of Æthelwulf); a unique specimen combining an obverse of Berhtwulf with an obverse of Æthelwulf (vol. 2, 20, L32a) seems in some way symbolic of this interaction. A note of caution is sounded by Rory Naismith, *Money and Power in Anglo-Saxon England: The Southern English Kingdoms, 757–865* (Cambridge: 2012), 141–142.

23 MEC, 310–311, with Naismith, *Coinage 796–865*, vol. 2, 198–205 (Dorb/Cant), 208–218 (Inscribed Cross, Æthelwulf) and 226–254 (Inscribed Cross, Æthelberht), and Naismith, *Money and Power*, 190 and 192.

24 MEC, 311–312; Blackburn, "London Mint," 109, and "Alfred's Coinage Reforms," 204–205; and Rory Naismith, "London and its Mint, c. 880–1066," *British Numismatic Journal* 83 (2013): 44–74. For evidence that the bishop of London attended not Mercian but West Saxon royal assemblies in the 860s, see Keynes, "Control of Kent," 128–130, citing S 327, dated 860 (from Rochester), and S 337, dated 867 (from London, St Paul's).

In 868 Burgred sought help from King Æthelred and his brother Alfred, in his own struggle against the Vikings; and in the same year Alfred married a Mercian wife.²⁵

In the years which followed Æthelwulf's death in 858, his four surviving sons were much exercised by their respective rights and expectations. The discussion became only more complex as the protagonists died (in 860, 865 and 871), and as children needed to be taken into account. At first Æthelwulf's bipartite kingdom had been divided between his sons Æthelbald, in the west, and Æthelberht, in the east; but on Æthelbald's death, in 860, the arrangements were modified in such a way that Æthelberht succeeded to a bipartite kingdom now made whole. After Æthelberht's death, in 865, there were further modifications: Æthelred became king of the whole kingdom, but Alfred (it seems) was acknowledged as his prospective successor. Alfred's "Mercian" marriage in 868 must therefore have had significant dimensions of its own, even if it could not have been known where they might lead. Æthelred died in 871, prompting further adjustments and assurances which seem in perilous times to have strengthened Alfred's position, securing the prospects of his own children.²⁶

The First Viking Invasion of Wessex (871), and its Aftermath

In the closing months of 870, or early in 871, the Viking invaders turned their attention towards the kingdom of the West Saxons. The received account of the engagements which followed, given in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for 871, was probably constructed some twenty years later, and is presented unsurprisingly from an Alfredian perspective. In the opening three months of the year, Æthelred and Alfred fought at least four battles against the Vikings. Then a "great summer army" arrived, and combined with those already in the field. In April King Æthelred died, whereupon the royal office passed not to one or other of his sons, but in accordance with earlier arrangements to his surviving brother. So it was Alfred, with a "small force," who fought against the "whole army," at Wilton, leaving the Danes in control of the battlefield; "and the West Saxons made peace with the army that year."²⁷

25 ASC, s.a. 868; Asser, Chapters 29–30.

26 Alfred's will (S 1507), in K&L, *Alfred*, 173–178 and 314–316, with Asser, Chapter 29.

27 For the chronicler's account of the events of 871, see *EHD*, 192–193; for Asser's representation of the same events, based on the *Chronicle*, see K&L, *Alfred*, 78–81.

Æthelred and Alfred survived in 871 by dogged resistance, though ultimately by “making peace,” no doubt involving a payment of money.²⁸ The consequence of the successful West Saxon strategy was of course to put the pressure back on the Mercians. After their withdrawal from Wessex, the Vikings wintered first in London (871–872), then at Torksey (872–873), and finally at Repton (873–874); metal-detection across open ground at Torksey, and controlled excavations in the vicarage garden at Repton, have revealed much about the realities behind these movements.²⁹ In 874 the Vikings “conquered all that land,” and Burgred himself was driven across the sea; a remarkable entry in the *Liber Vitae* of Brescia provides evidence of his passage through northern Italy, with Queen Æthelswith and others, evidently on their way to Rome.³⁰ According to the (West Saxon) chronicler, the Vikings gave the kingdom of the Mercians to Ceolwulf, “a foolish king’s thegn,” who would hold it for them and at their service; whereupon one part of the army went north into Northumbria, and the other back eastwards to Cambridge. Ceolwulf seems to have been left at this stage (in 874) as the nominal ruler of the whole of the kingdom of the Mercians, extending across most of the land between the Humber and the Thames; but of course we may doubt that he held all in his sway. He convened royal assemblies, at which royal diplomas were issued, and which to judge from the appended witness-lists were attended by bishops of Worcester, Lichfield and Hereford.³¹ However, in 877 a Viking army returned via Wessex into Mercia, choosing to settle in part of the kingdom which they had “conquered” three years before. It was presumably at this stage that the Vikings settled in the east midlands (including the territory of Five Boroughs), leaving Ceolwulf in control of the more westerly and south-westerly parts of the Mercian kingdom, and also (it seems) in control of London.

The evidence of coinage provides a valuable insight, again, into the political and economic dynamics which lie behind the superficial and probably

28 Simon Keynes, “A Tale of Two Kings: Alfred the Great and Æthelred the Unready,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5th ser. 36 (1986): 195–217, at 198–201.

29 Mark Blackburn, “The Viking Winter Camp at Torksey, 872–873,” in his *Viking Coinage and Currency in the British Isles* (London: 2011), 221–264; Martin Biddle, “Repton,” in *WB-EnASE*, 401–403.

30 Simon Keynes, “Anglo-Saxon Entries in the ‘Liber Vitae’ of Brescia,” in *Alfred the Wise: Studies in honour of Janet Bately on the Occasion of her sixty-fifth birthday*, ed. Jane Roberts and Janet L. Nelson with M. Godden (Cambridge: 1997), 99–119; Dieter Geuenich and Uwe Ludwig, *Der Memorial- und Liturgiecodex von San Salvatore / Santa Giulia in Brescia* (Hannover: 2000), 92–93, 167 and 171.

31 S 215 and S 216, both from Worcester and dated 875; S. Keynes, *An Atlas of Attestations in Anglo-Saxon Charters, c. 670–1066* (Cambridge, 2002), Table XIV.

distorted record found in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. In the early 870s coins of the *Lunette* type were minted in the names of Burgred of Mercia (at the London mint) and Alfred of Wessex (at Canterbury). Following the “conquest” of Mercia and Burgred’s departure, in 874, London seems to have remained under “English” control. During the years from c. 875 to c. 880 its moneyers produced not only coins in the name of Ceolwulf but also coins in the name of Alfred. The *Geometric-Quatrefoil* type, known from a single specimen minted for Alfred, stands out from the norm for its design, quality of production, and weight, and is thought to have been produced c. 875 (Plate 1.1, no. 4).³² The *Two Emperors* type, known from a single specimen for each king, is also regarded as an “experimental” type; its reverse design seems singularly appropriate to the conditions, but it was based on a common Roman coin-type and its intended significance is thus uncertain (Plate 1.1, nos. 6–7).³³ *Two Emperors* was soon replaced by *Cross-and-Lozenge* (Plate 1.1, nos. 8–9).³⁴ In this case the portrait on the obverse was derived from a Roman model, and the reverse design was in the “Mercian” tradition. In London, coins of this type were struck in the names of both kings, perhaps for one after the other, perhaps for both simultaneously; the most prolific moneyer, Liafwald, worked for both kings. At Canterbury, coins of the *Cross-and-Lozenge* type were minted for Alfred and for Archbishop Æthelred; and it would appear that they were minted also (for Alfred) at a mint elsewhere in Wessex, and (for Ceolwulf) at a mint elsewhere in Mercia. Complications and uncertainties remain; but the strong impression created by this evidence is of a form of monetary union between Wessex and Mercia, established between Alfred and Ceolwulf in the mid- to later 870s – in direct development of practices attested already in the later 860s and early 870s.

The evidence of charters and coins makes it difficult, therefore, to accept the chronicler’s disparaging reference to Ceolwulf as indicative of an attitude which prevailed in the mid-870s. The remark probably represents an opinion adopted in the early 890s by someone ready to make a mockery of the more distant past in defence or explanation of the political situation which by his day had come to prevail.

32 Mark Blackburn and Simon Keynes, “A Corpus of the *Cross-and-Lozenge* and Related Coinages of Alfred, Ceolwulf II and Archbishop Æthelred,” in *Kings, Currency and Alliances*, ed. Blackburn and Dumville, 125–150, at 129–130.

33 Blackburn and Keynes, “Corpus of *Cross-and-Lozenge*,” 131–132.

34 The specimens described in Blackburn and Keynes, “Corpus of *Cross-and-Lozenge*,” 134–146, are now supplemented by four further specimens, on which see Blackburn, “Alfred’s Coinage Reforms,” 212–214 and 216–217.

The Second Viking Invasion of Wessex (878), and its Aftermath

The Alfredian chronicler was able in retrospect to distinguish between the year in which the Danes “conquered” a kingdom and the year in which they “shared out” the land.³⁵ Between 869 and 875 they “conquered” first the kingdom of the East Angles (869), then the kingdom of the Mercians (874), and finally the kingdom of the Northumbrians (875), leaving only the extended kingdom of the West Saxons still holding firm against their onslaught. In 876 a group “settled” in Northumbria, and in 877 another group “settled” in Mercia (probably in the east midlands). A further group, under Guthrum, remained intent upon subduing Wessex, and in January 878 took the West Saxons by surprise. Alfred retreated into the Somerset marshes, and by Easter (23 March) had taken refuge at Athelney. Many of the familiar stories about Alfred arise from this period, starting with those told in the *Chronicle*; but the West Saxons emerged victorious, whereupon the Danes withdrew into Ceolwulf’s kingdom. After passing the winter of 878–879 in Cirencester, Guthrum and his army returned eastwards into East Anglia, where they settled “and shared out the land.”

Alfred’s victory at Edington in 878 must have enhanced his standing among the English people in general (*Angelcynn*),³⁶ and seems soon to have led, directly or indirectly, to the extension of his rule over a significant part of the former kingdom of the Mercians. In a regnal list preserved at the church of Worcester, Ceolwulf was assigned a reign of five years, which if calculated from 874 would take us to 879 as a likely date for his death, deposition, or departure. Alfred may have seized his opportunity, representing himself as the natural heir to Mercian political interests (after the earlier “alliances”); or perhaps some among those holding power and exerting influence among the Mercians saw an advantage in their submission to Alfred’s rule (albeit a view which might not have been shared by all). A key issue at this stage would have been the position of London in the aftermath of Ceolwulf’s disappearance from the scene. The statement in the *Chronicle* to the effect that in 886 Alfred occupied London, and made it habitable again, was once taken to imply that the city had fallen under Danish control in the later 870s, remaining so until 886.

35 K&L, *Alfred*, 212 n. 13.

36 The notion of an “English” people (*gens Anglorum*, or *Angelcynn*) had been familiar for over 150 years, in the pages of Bede’s *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, and became a commonplace in the ninth century, when it was used as a term applied to the “English”-speaking peoples of Britain, in their common opposition or subjection to the Danes. For wider discussion, see Sharon M. Rowley, *The Old English Version of Bede’s “Historia ecclesiastica”* (Woodbridge: 2011), with references.

A turning-point in understanding of the period came in the mid-1980s, when archaeologists first suggested that the mid-Saxon emporium of London would appear to have been located immediately *outside* and to the west of the city walls, and that Alfred's contribution in 886 had been to strengthen the city's defences, moving its people back *inside* the old Roman walls for their own protection.³⁷ The suggestion prompted a review of the numismatic evidence, and at the same time of the literary and documentary evidence. The moneyers in London who in the later 870s had struck coins for Alfred as well as for Ceolwulf continued in the early 880s to strike coins for Alfred.³⁸ It seemed likely on the basis of this evidence that London, having come into Ceolwulf's hands in 874, remained under English control after his demise, c. 879. The text known as the "Treaty between Alfred and Guthrum," which leaves London on the "English" side of the boundary with the Danes, might then be re-dated c. 880 (brought back from c. 886), after the settlement of the Danes in the eastern midlands (877) and East Anglia (880), after the death (or whatever) of King Ceolwulf (c. 879), and perhaps soon after Alfred had taken upon himself the rule of the English people living elsewhere in the former kingdom of the Mercians.³⁹ It would follow that Guthrum, though represented in the treaty as ruler of the people in East Anglia, was at that stage regarded as one who could also speak for the Danes settled in the east midlands. Moreover, an addition to the annal for 883 in the *Chronicle*, thought to belong to the annal for 886, could be left where it was, indicating that a Viking army had occupied London, briefly, in 883; it was then following the threat to Rochester, in 885, that Alfred took decisive measures, in 886, to secure the defences of London.

Nothing is known of the precise circumstances in which Alfred extended his rule over the Mercians, c. 880. A certain Æthelred emerges into view in the early 880s. His origins are obscure, but his associations may have lain in the south-western part of Mercia, perhaps in or around Gloucester. He had acknowledged Alfred's rule by 883; was entrusted by Alfred with the control of London in 886; had married Alfred's daughter Æthelflæd seemingly by 887 and

37 For references, see Simon Keynes, "King Alfred and the Mercians," in *Kings, Currency and Alliances*, ed. Blackburn and Dumville, 1–45, at 23 n. 106; see also Derek Keene, "Alfred and London," in *Alfred*, ed. Reuter, 235–249.

38 Blackburn and Keynes, "Corpus of *Cross-and-Lozenge*"; Blackburn, "London Mint"; Blackburn, "Alfred's Coinage Reforms."

39 For the treaty, see K&L, *Alfred*, 171–172 and 311–313, with Keynes, "Alfred and the Mercians," esp. 21–26, superseding K&L, *Alfred*, 37–38 and 266. Alfred is styled "king," but the "councillors of all the English race" were seemingly conceived for this purpose as a distinct body.

certainly by 893; and on his death in 911 was buried in Gloucester.⁴⁰ The event which took place at London in 886 was evidently a grand assembly held in the presence of the king, attended by persons of standing drawn from all parts of the kingdom, who were able in some sense to represent others. The Alfredian chronicler, writing c. 890, described how “all the English people that were not under subjection to the Danes” submitted to Alfred; which Asser, writing in 893, took to mean all of the “Angles and Saxons” who had formerly been scattered everywhere and were not in captivity with the heathen.⁴¹ Those *in captivity* would have been the English of East Anglia, eastern Mercia, and Northumbria, whose kingdoms had already been conquered and settled. Those *not in captivity* would have been the English of western and southern Mercia, i.e. to the west and south of the boundary with Guthrum, and north of the Thames, perhaps including people who had decided not to remain wherever they had lived before. The likelihood is, however, that the submission in 886 represented not so much the establishment of a new polity as the formal recognition or symbolic validation of a polity which had been established c. 880, after Ceolwulf’s demise. Æthelred had already played a significant part in whatever process had been involved; and in 886 the king seems in a further ceremony to have entrusted him with control of the place which was central to the interests of those living both north and south of the river Thames.⁴²

The new Alfredian polity was significantly different from the kingdom of the West Saxons (with its extensions in the south-east), for the simple reason that it incorporated that part of the former kingdom of the Mercians which remained under English control. Given the distinctive styles accorded to Alfred in his Latin diplomas of the 880s and 890s, and the style applied to him by Asser (writing in 893), it seems appropriate that this polity should be called the “kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons.”⁴³ If Alfred’s treaty with Guthrum represented an early stage in the formation of the new political order, Alfred’s code of laws

40 Keynes, “Alfred and the Mercians,” 19–34.

41 K&L, *Alfred*, 98 and 200.

42 For Queenhithe (formerly “Æthelred’s hithe”), just upriver of the north end of Southwark Bridge, see Robin Wroe-Brown, “The Saxon Origins of Queenhithe,” *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society* 50 (1999): 12–16, with references.

43 K&L, *Alfred*, 38–39 and 227–228; Nelson, “Political Ideas of Alfred,” 134–135; Keynes, “West Saxon Charters,” 1147–1148, “Alfred and the Mercians,” 34–39, and “Power of the Written Word,” 185–188; Pratt, *Political Thought*, 105–107. Alfred’s power did not extend over *all* of the English, and it may be that the style was devised, for use in the king’s charters, to express a combination of peoples which fell short of a union of peoples. The more exalted position was, however, by this time a credible aspiration, brought significantly closer in 927. See also Wormald, “Living with Alfred,” 20.

might be regarded as its declaration of existence. The text is subsumed with a sense of its own grandeur, leading in a prologue and 120 chapters from the Ten Commandments, and the Golden Rule, via an expression of the king's debt to earlier Kentish, West Saxon, and Mercian legislation, into a substantive body of laws running in Alfred's own name, followed by the appended laws of his renowned predecessor King Ine (688–726), representing his West Saxons origins.⁴⁴ It is nothing if not aspirational, raising the English peoples to an exalted level; though we need not doubt that it was intended, as such, to serve a practical purpose. It is the king's coinage, however, which demonstrates the reality of Alfred's position as king "of the Anglo-Saxons." The *Cross-and-Lozenge* type was probably discontinued soon after Ceolwulf's demise in 879. From the early 880s we encounter some relatively short-lived local or "experimental" types, before a more widespread type, which seems to have been introduced at about the same time, came to prevail. Best known, because relatively plentiful, are the coins (from London) of the *London Monogram* type, which combine a "portrait" of the king (based on a Roman model) with a monogram forming the word "Londonia" on the reverse (Plate 1.1, no. 12). No less significant are two other mint-signed types issued in Alfred's name: a portrait type minted at Gloucester (Plate 1.1, no. 10), and a non-portrait type minted at Oxford (Plate 1.1, no. 11). These three types might appear at first glance to have little in common, yet they were minted in Alfred's name at three important centres of the (former) Mercian kingdom, and seem as a group to proclaim that a new and overtly "Alfredian" polity had come into being. On another mint-signed type, known from specimens issued at Winchester and at Exeter in the heart of Wessex, the king is styled "rex Saxonum" (Plate 1.1, nos. 16–17), suggesting that "local" identities endured.⁴⁵ It is, however, Alfred's far more common (if somewhat less than attractive) *Two-Line* type, current from the early 880s until the end of his reign (Plate 1.1, no. 13–14), which should claim our attention as the coin-type symbolic of the Alfredian kingdom "of the Anglo-Saxons." The king is "ÆLFRED REX"; moneys are named, but not the mint; and while modern analysis suggests that most of the coins were struck probably in London, Canterbury and

44 For the law-code, see Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century*, I: *Legislation and its Limits* (Oxford: 1999), 265–285; Pratt, *Political Thought*, 214–241; and Todd Preston, *King Alfred's Book of Laws: A Study of the "Domboc" and its Influence on English Identity* (Jefferson, NC: 2012). Wormald regarded the code as a product of the mid-890s (after Asser's *Life*); it is more likely in my view to have been a product of the late 880s (or c. 890). For further discussion, see Richards, Chapter 10, below.

45 Alfred styles himself king "of the West Saxons" in his law-code and in his will.

Winchester, a unified monetary system was now extending deeper into the heartlands of the former kingdoms of Wessex and Mercia.⁴⁶

One can only guess what impact the experience of the 870s might have had on those who became responsible in the 880s for protecting the country, in its new political configuration, against any threat of further invasion. Our attention is bound to focus on Alfred himself, as if he were solely in charge, but many others must have been involved. At one level, guidance for a king was available in the Old Testament, notably in the accounts of David and Solomon; and there were also examples in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*.⁴⁷ At another level, contact of some kind was maintained in the 880s with secular and ecclesiastical powers in Francia, and beyond the Alps with the authorities in Rome. Most important, of course, was the collective experience of those among the English who had lived through the events of the past thirty years, and who knew most about the current state of the country's defences, and its resources.⁴⁸ Some of them might even have asked themselves what the English had done to deserve God's punishment on such a scale, and been moved by the changing circumstances to dwell on the available means of securing peace and prosperity in the longer term.

Alfred's Program for the Revival of Religion, Learning and Literacy

Alfred's undertakings in the 880s were the product of a combination of changed circumstances. In 878 a Viking army had arrived in the Thames; but on making contact with the force upriver, recently defeated at Edington, it passed the winter of 878–879 at Fulham, and then left the country. The English must have known that the threat had not passed, and that the Vikings might return at any time (as they did, briefly, in 885). On the other hand, by 880 the last of the Viking armies which had been active in the 870s had "settled" (in East Anglia), and the Alfredian polity was being extended and re-formulated as the kingdom "of the Anglo-Saxons." The continued threat meant that there was no room for complacency, while the changed circumstances, and with them the access to

46 *MEC*, 313–316; Blackburn, "Alfred's Coinage Reforms," 205–208 and 214.

47 Keynes, "Tale of Two Kings," 208–210.

48 *The Defence of Wessex: The Burghal Hidage and Anglo-Saxon Fortifications*, ed. David Hill and Alexander R. Rumble (Manchester: 1996); Nicholas Brooks, "Alfredian Government: The West Saxon Inheritance," in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Reuter, 154–173; *Landscapes of Defence in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. J. Baker, S. Brookes and A. Reynolds (Turnhout, 2013).

fresh manpower and greater resources, created new opportunities for innovation as well as for reform.

To judge from Asser's account, Alfred had been of bookish disposition from a very young age. As a boy, in the mid-850s, he had won a book of English poetry from his mother, in competition with his elder brothers; though it was not until he was 12 (c. 860) that he began to learn how to read English for himself, and not until some time later on, represented as St Martin's Day 887, that he learnt how to read Latin and to understand it (simultaneously) in English.⁴⁹ As a four-year-old, in 853, Alfred had traveled to Rome, perhaps accompanying his elder brother Æthelred as part of a delegation representing their father.⁵⁰ Two years later, in 855, Alfred went to Rome for a second time, with his father, staying for several months on the way home at the court of Charles the Bald, during which period Æthelwulf received Charles's daughter Judith as his second wife.⁵¹ The impact of these adventures on a young and impressionable boy should not be underestimated. Even if he could not have understood all that he saw, he could not fail to have been impressed by the grandeur of the ancient city of Rome, and by the magnificence of the church of St Peter, and would have been made aware of the pope's standing in the ecclesiastical order.⁵² He would also have seen for himself the trappings of the Carolingian court.⁵³ Alfred returned knowing more of the world than many, and seems to have been predisposed thereafter to look outside for what he could not find within. Little is known of Alfred's intellectual development in the 860s and 870s, beyond Asser's remarks about his thirst for knowledge and the lack of teachers.⁵⁴ We do hear, however, that Alfred kept constantly with him a "little book" (*libellus*), into which were copied some offices, psalms and prayers learnt in his

49 Asser, Chapters 22–23, 76–77, 81 and 87–89. For this understanding of Asser's account, see K&L, *Alfred*, p. 239 n. 46, and Pratt, *Political Thought*, 89; for a more elaborate exposition (substituting 40 for 12, and postponing Alfred's attainment of literacy, in English as well as in Latin, until 887, coinciding with the end of the Carolingian empire), see Wormald, "Living with Alfred," 24–39; for another interpretation, see Godden, "Stories," 127–129.

50 Keynes, "Anglo-Saxon Entries," 112–113; and Nelson, "Æthelwulf."

51 *Annals of Saint-Bertin*, in *EHD*, 343.

52 For the wider context, see the essays assembled in *England and Rome in the Early Middle Ages: Pilgrimage, Art and Politics*, ed. F. Tinti (Turnhout: 2014), with further references.

53 For Alfred in this wider continental context, see Janet Nelson, "Alfred's Continental Contemporaries," in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Reuter, 293–310; and Paul Kershaw, *Peaceful Kings: Peace, Power, and the Early Medieval Political Imagination* (Oxford: 2011), with further references.

54 Asser, Chapters 24–25 and 76.

youth – perhaps comprising a mixture of texts in Latin, with or without English glosses, and in English.⁵⁵

The contemporary perception seems to have been that the English had neglected to maintain the standards proper to a Christian people, and that the Viking invasions were a form of divine punishment for their sins.⁵⁶ Standards of literacy had been maintained in the vernacular, not least for “pragmatic” purposes, but difficulties arose from a decline in standards of Latin learning and literacy, and concomitantly from a dearth of vernacular versions of requisite texts. A strangely incompetent charter of Archbishop Æthelred, dated 873, has become symbolic of the decline, at Canterbury, of competence in Latin; and although a distinctive tradition appears to have been maintained in Wessex, into the late 860s, it left much to be desired.⁵⁷ In the 880s, Alfred was in a position to summon learned men from Mercia into his own presence, building in this respect on the bonds which had developed, since the 850s, between two kingdoms which in political terms had been moving (so it would seem) in opposite directions.⁵⁸ The four Mercians who came to Alfred were evidently the first to enter his service in this way.⁵⁹ Wærferth, as bishop of Worcester, must have become a figure of particular significance at Alfred’s court, and may indeed have taken an important early initiative in providing the king with a translation of Pope Gregory’s *Dialogues*.⁶⁰ Plegmund, Æthelstan,

55 Asser, Chapters 24 and 88. For the wider context, see Pratt, “Illnesses,” 45–49, and *Political Thought*, 89, 120; see also Godden, “Stories,” 131. Cf. the prayer book prepared by Alcuin for the use of laymen (below, n. 104).

56 K&L, *Alfred*, 25–26, citing Archbishop Fulco’s letter to Alfred (reporting Alfred’s remarks to him), King Alfred’s preface to the *Pastoral Care*, and Asser, Chapter 93.

57 S 344, edited with discussion in *Charters of Christ Church Canterbury*, ed. Brooks and Kelly, 793–799 (no. 93). Keynes, “West Saxon Charters,” and “Power of the Written Word,” 184.

58 For a different view of the “Mercian” dimension, see Godden, “Stories,” 134–135. If Asser implies in Chapters 76–77 that the Mercians were from “outside” Alfred’s own kingdom, he may not mean anything more than that the helpers came from outside Wessex; the position in the mid-880s is well established by the evidence of charters and coins. Nor is there any necessary “denial” of Mercian scholarship in the preface to the *Pastoral Care*; and while Bishop Wærferth received a copy, it does not follow that he was among the bishops said (in the verse preface) to have known little Latin, or that he was then at Worcester (and not also at Alfred’s court).

59 Asser, Chapter 77.

60 For the *Dialogues*, see Malcolm Godden, “Wærferth and King Alfred: The Fate of the Old English *Dialogues*,” in *Alfred the Wise*, ed. Roberts, *et al.*, 35–51, and “Alfredian Project,” 95–100; see also Irvine, Chapter 5, and Johnson, Chapter 13, in this volume.

and Wærwulf might also have come from Worcester, or from any of the other episcopal sees (Lichfield, Hereford, Dorchester, London), or from one or other of several religious houses (e.g. Winchcombe), or indeed from a residual body of clergy who had served the previous regime. Plegmund was installed at Canterbury from 890, as successor to Archbishop Æthelred, remaining in office there for over thirty years; Æthelstan and Wærwulf continued to serve as priests in the royal household into the reign of Edward the Elder.⁶¹ Alfred's head-hunting also extended further afield. At least two men came to him from across the channel: Grimbald, a priest and monk from the monastery of St Bertin, in Flanders, and John, a priest and monk probably from eastern Francia.⁶² Grimbald came to be closely associated with Winchester, and John (the Old Saxon) was appointed abbot of Athelney in Somerset.⁶³ As Asser put it: "Through their teaching the king's outlook was very considerably broadened." Asser himself had come to Alfred from the church of St David's, in south-west Wales, and was in time appointed bishop of Sherborne.⁶⁴ In his *Life of Alfred*, Asser tells of an occasion on St Martin's day (11 November) 887, which he remembered (or represented) as an epiphanic moment for the king. Alfred and Asser had been discussing a certain passage in a book, evidently in Latin. The king liked it so much that he asked Asser to copy it into the "little book" which he always kept with him; but this little book was full, so Asser prepared a new quire or gathering (*quarternio*), into which he copied first the passage in question, and then three other passages. As soon as the first of these passages had been copied into the new quire, Alfred determined or endeavoured (*studuit*) to read the Latin text, to understand it in English, and from it (*inde*), perhaps in that way, to instruct or to enlighten a great many people (*perplures instituere*).⁶⁵ In the preface to his translation of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care*,

61 K&L, *Alfred*, 259, and "Plegmund," in *WB-EnASE*, 378–379.

62 Asser, Chapter 78. For Grimbald, see also Archbishop Fulco's letter to Alfred (K&L, *Alfred*, 182–186 and 331–333), discussed further by Janet L. Nelson, "...sic ut olim gens Francorum... nunc gens Anglorum: Fulk's Letter to Alfred Revisited," in *Alfred the Wise*, ed. Roberts, *et al.*, 135–144; and Godden, "Stories," 135–137. For Grimbald and John, see Alfred's preface to the *Pastoral Care* (K&L, *Alfred*, 126).

63 For Grimbald at Winchester, see *The "Liber Vitae" of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester*, ed. Simon Keynes (Copenhagen: 1996), 16–18. John may have demitted office as abbot, as he is found latterly as a royal priest (K&L, *Alfred*, 260).

64 Asser, Chapters 79–81, with Keynes, "Asser," in *WB-EnASE*, 51–52.

65 Asser, Chapters 87–89, with K&L, *Alfred*, 28 and 268 n. 208. There is no necessary implication that the new quire prepared by Asser for the Latin excerpts, which became what he also describes as a "little book" (*libellus*), which grew almost to the size of a psalter, and which Alfred himself called his *enchiridion*, or "hand-book," was prefixed or appended to

Alfred names Asser, with Archbishop Plegmund and the mass-priests Grimbald and John, as among those who had helped him to understand the Latin text. Asser might well have “improved” what was probably an aspect of the same story, for purposes of his own, perhaps as a way of stressing the closeness of his relationship with the king, and the king’s enthusiasm for learning, for the benefit of whatever audience he had in mind. It was a way of showing how by divine inspiration the king had acquired a particular skill, or gift, and resolved to put it to good use.⁶⁶

It is appropriate that the work chosen to introduce the program of translations was Pope Gregory’s *Regula pastoralis*. Its significance had been advertised by Bede, writing in 731; and an expurgated version was included among a set of texts gathered together and circulated c. 750, apparently by Cuthbert, archbishop of Canterbury, acting in association with Æthelbald, king of the Mercians, in response to Archbishop Boniface’s complaints about the English.⁶⁷ In the preface to his translation of the *Pastoral Care*, Alfred expressed his confidence that translations of books deemed “most necessary for all men to know” could be produced, “provided we have the quiet [or peace, or freedom from other distraction]” (“gif we þa stilnesse habbað,” *PC* 7.8–9). The remark is understood most naturally as a wishful thought that all would be well as long as the current “quiet” lasted, expressed during a period of peace and prompted by apprehension that the Vikings might soon return. It seems less likely that this form of words would have been chosen if written during the years 892–896, when a Viking army was at large in the kingdom.⁶⁸ As bishop of Sherborne, Asser would have been among the recipients of Alfred’s letter; but by the time

the “little book” (*libellus*) which Alfred had shown him. Alfred might have had *two* “little books” (one his old prayer book, the other a collection of excerpts) which he kept by himself continually, and which complemented each other (see Pratt, “Illnesses,” 45–47, with *Political Thought*, 119–120). A book which survived at Worcester in the twelfth century, known as the *dicta* of Alfred, “king of the Anglo-Saxons,” and a book identified by William of Malmesbury as the king’s “handbook,” were probably one and the same; if so, the reference is more likely to have been to the second than to the first of the two “little books,” extending our sense of its contents (Pratt, *Political Thought*, 81, 91, 127, 141–142).

- 66 A significantly different understanding of Asser, Chapters 87–89, is advanced by Godden, “Stories,” 129–32. In his view (131), Asser is saying that as soon as he had copied the first passage into the new booklet, the king “endeavoured to read [it] and interpret [it] in the Saxon language and then to set down (*instituire*) many more [passages] (*perplures*),” undoing any wider implications.
- 67 Simon Keynes, “The Reconstruction of a Burnt Cottonian Manuscript: The Case of Cotton ms. Otho A. I,” *British Library Journal* 22 (1996): 113–160, at 141; Pratt, *Political Thought*, 141.
- 68 Keynes, “Power,” 193, and Pratt, *Political Thought*, 154; cf. Godden, “Stories,” 123–126 and 134.

he was writing, in 893, the Vikings had returned, and were posing a serious threat in the heart of Wessex. Under these circumstances, it might have been difficult to maintain the momentum of any such project, at least until peace returned; and while Asser was closely involved, he chose for whatever reason to say no more than he did. Peace or “stillness” returned in 896, so perhaps the work, if it had been suspended, was soon resumed. If any work remained unfinished (or not yet started) at the time of Alfred’s death, in 899, it is to be expected that some of those involved, including Asser (d. 911), Wærferth (d. c. 915) and Plegmund (d. 923), might have continued to take matters forward, after the king’s death yet still in the king’s good name.

Alfred’s purpose in encouraging the production of English versions of works otherwise available only in Latin can be understood on various levels. Much is to be learnt, of course, from the analysis of the translations themselves, in their own right as products of their age; much depends at the same time on the “Alfredian” credentials of those translations which have been accepted or have come to be regarded as his work and thus representative of his own thought.⁶⁹ Alfred’s preface to the *Pastoral Care* retains its authority, and contains an unambiguous statement of his larger purpose: the provision of English versions of certain key texts, so that “all the free-born youth now found among the English (‘ðe nu is on Angelcynne’, 7.10)...may be set to learning...until the time that they can read English writings properly” – with further instruction in Latin for those advancing to holy orders. Asser has more to say about the “school” itself, revealing that it formed part of the royal household, and that the training extended to writing as well as reading.⁷⁰ He alludes more than once to the problems which Alfred had to overcome in achieving his purpose, not least the slow-witted holders of administrative office, the self-interest shown by laymen, and the lack of interest among them in adopting the religious life.⁷¹ Yet he implies at the same time that Alfred was determined to ensure that literacy in English extended beyond those in holy orders and reached down through secular society from his ealdormen to his reeves and thegns: so that they could read the translations and learn more of the books most necessary for all men to know, and (one imagines) so that they could also read the vernacular documents on which government of the enlarged kingdom would depend, including law-codes,⁷² and even produce documentation of their own. The vernacular had been used for “pragmatic” purposes since the early seventh

69 Pratt, *Political Thought*, and Bately, Chapter 4, below.

70 Asser, Chapters 75 (reading and writing), 76, 102, 106, with K&L, *Alfred*, 35–36 and 257 n. 148.

71 Asser, Chapters 91 and 105–106.

72 Richards, Chapter 10, below.

century, increasingly so from the early ninth century onwards. Alfred was building on these foundations but aspired to take matters further.⁷³

The picture which emerges in this way from the combined evidence of Alfred's preface to the *Pastoral Care*, and Asser's *Life of Alfred*, can be substantiated in certain respects. The king is said to have earmarked one half of his annual income "for God in full devotion": an eighth as almsgiving for "the poor of every race who came to him"; an eighth for the support of the two houses he had founded in Wessex; an eighth for the school "which he had assiduously assembled from many nobles of his own race and also from boys not of noble birth"; and an eighth for the support of other houses in Wessex, in Mercia, and elsewhere.⁷⁴ The ultimate religious house was St Peter's, in Rome, which Alfred had visited in 853 and 855. Thirty years later he was in contact with Pope Marinus (882–884), from whom he received a piece of the Cross; and it was perhaps at about this time that he became familiar with Pope Gregory's remarks, in the *Regula pastoralis*, on the distribution of alms (*diuidendae elemosynae*).⁷⁵ The gift from Pope Marinus was registered in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, prompting a series of references to expeditions to Rome for the giving of alms, which were maintained in one form or another for several years (883, 887–890).⁷⁶ Alfred's conspicuous almsgiving, so well represented in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, and in Asser's *Life*, is given more tangible form by the remarkable "offering pieces," each so much larger and heavier than his silver pennies, inscribed "Alfred rex Saxonum" on the obverse and "ELIMO-" on the reverse (Plate 1.1, no. 18).⁷⁷

Alfred is said to have promoted building on various scales and of all kinds, in stone and in wood, and to have commissioned works in gold and silver.⁷⁸

73 He may have been building consciously on Charlemagne's capitulary *De litteris colendis* (c. 784), on which see Rosamond McKitterick, *Charlemagne* (Cambridge: 2008), 316. For literacy in Latin and English, see M.R. Godden, "Literacy in Anglo-Saxon England," in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, I: c. 400–1100, ed. Richard Gameson (Cambridge: 2012), 580–590. For "pragmatic" literacy, see also M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1217*, 3rd ed. (London: 2012). Earlier editions of this important work, published in 1979 and 1993, take little account of the pre-Conquest evidence; the third edition incorporates significant modifications, and the author admits (337–338) that it might have been better to begin the survey in 900.

74 Asser, Chapters 92–98 (Athelney and Shaftesbury) and 102 (division of income).

75 Asser, Chapter 102; see also Pratt, "Illnesses," 71–72.

76 Keynes, "Alfred and the Mercians," 22–23 (cf. K&L, *Alfred*, 254 n. 137, 266 n. 198, and 268 n. 206), and Pratt, "Illnesses," 69–70.

77 Dolley and Blunt, "Chronology," 77–78; *MEC*, 314.

78 Asser, Chapter 91.

Again, one need not look far for the reality.⁷⁹ There are bound to be degrees of uncertainty about the origin, dating, and interpretation of any small object, but the evidence for a distinctive body of “Alfredian” metalwork in the late ninth century is compelling.⁸⁰ The gold rings associated with King Æthelwulf and Queen Æthelswith remind us that the craftsmanship and the thoughtful iconography were deep-rooted. The Alfred Jewel retains its place at the top end of an ever-extending range of “unidentified socketed objects.” If it is correctly identified as a decorative terminal from an *æstel*, or pointer, used for indicating one’s place when reading across a line or down the page, and if it carries the other such objects with it, the implications for the spread of literacy (or for instruction in literacy) are startling.⁸¹ It might be better to wait, however, until yet another such object is found in a context which makes its purpose clear, and then to reassess their significance as a group (if indeed they still form a group). The extraordinary iconography of the Fuller Brooch is now better understood, and more effectively contextualized, than ever before.⁸² No less remarkable, however, is the appearance, in two quite different contexts, of a design which shows a man cutting grapes from a vine; for its use on the Codford St Peter stone cross, and on the Cranbourne strap-end, suggests that a visual metaphor for a man gathering fruit or wine (whatever its intended meaning may have been) had become commonplace among craftsmen of this period.⁸³

King Alfred’s program for the revival of religion, learning and literacy was just one aspect of the measures undertaken by him, and those around him, in the continuing struggle against the Danes. It was a product of and cannot be separated from the emergence during the 880s of the Alfredian “kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons,” so well attested by the evidence of law-codes, charters and coins. It was complemented by reorganization of administrative arrangements, and by all the hard work which must have gone into the repair and improvement of the kingdom’s defences. When the Danes returned, they met with a very different situation, represented on the ground by more effective resistance and at another level by a more rarified form of response.

79 R.A. Hall, “*Burhs* and Boroughs,” in *Handbook*, ed. Hamerow, *et al*, 600–621.

80 Webster, “Treasures,” and below, Chapter 2.

81 K&L, *Alfred*, 203–206 (discussing two such objects), and Pratt, *Political Thought*, 189–192 (discussing four); to which should now be added three more, found in Warwickshire, Yorkshire, and the Lofoten Islands. For multiple *æstels*, see Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 154–155; and David A. Hinton, *The Alfred Jewel and Other Late Anglo-Saxon Decorated Metalwork* (Oxford: 2008), 25–29 and 30–39.

82 Pratt, “Fuller Brooch,” in *WB-EnASE*, 201–203, and *Political Thought*, 187–188; Webster, Chapter 2.

83 Webster, “Treasures,” 88–89; *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 156 and 159; and Chapter 2, esp. 66–71, below.

Constructing Alfred

In 892 the Viking army which had wintered at Fulham in 878–879, and which had left thereafter for the continent, came back to Alfred's kingdom, where it was soon joined by another force. The combined threat must have represented a moment of crisis for Alfred and his "Anglo-Saxon" people. If so, it was a crisis which seems to have prompted publication of what has come to be known as the "common stock" of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. It is arguable, moreover, that the appearance of the *Chronicle*, in English, prompted Asser to make use of it as the basis for his *Life of King Alfred*, written in 893, in Latin, probably for a quite different audience.

At some date perhaps in the late 880s, persons unknown but probably among those in regular and close proximity to the king, began work on the compilation of the sequence of annals which would become the first stage of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.⁸⁴ A copy of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* lay not far behind their work, supplemented by some other materials, including a collection of royal genealogies and episcopal lists of a kind likely to have been maintained at or distributed from the church of Canterbury.⁸⁵ When visiting the court of Charles the Bald in the mid-850s, King Æthelwulf and those with him might have become aware of the *Annales regni Francorum*, and other sets of Frankish annals; it is otherwise to be expected that Grimbold and John the Old Saxon would have been able to provide information (perhaps even examples).⁸⁶ Little is known of the circumstances in which material was collected, or of the way in which written records were combined with information not previously set down in writing. The challenges which faced the compilers are apparent from the difficulty they had in achieving much sense of continuity or flow; yet they brought together and co-ordinated material drawn from various sources, and by merging the information in a single sequence of annals did their best to create a common past for the English people, adding a historical and even a political dimension to the sense of identity which depended otherwise on their common language and their common opposition to the Danes. The account of events in the 850s, 860s and 870s would thus have been written

84 For the original extent of the *Chronicle* (to 892), see K&L, *Alfred*, 41–42 and 275–281, with Simon Keynes, "Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*," in *Book in Britain*, ed. Gameson, 537–552, and Irvine (Chapter 13).

85 Simon Keynes, "Between Bede and the *Chronicle*: BL Cotton Vespasian B. vi, fols. 104–109," *Latin Learning and English Lore*, ed. Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe and Andy Orchard, 2 vols. (Toronto: 2005), I, 47–67.

86 For the *Annales regni Francorum*, see McKitterick, *Charlemagne*, 31–43.

up some years after the events, representing a view of the past constructed c. 890 for the intended benefit of an audience which had already moved beyond its separate “West Saxon” or “Mercian” origins. It is the only account that we have of the warfare, but should of course be approached with all due circumspection. The chronicler represents Alfred as “making peace” with the enemy, when one can be fairly sure that he meant buying them off; unsurprisingly, he was also keen to convey as positive an impression as he could.⁸⁷ The air of retrospection accounts also for the patterning with which the chronicler describes first the “conquest” of the kingdoms of East Angles (870), the Mercians (874), and the Northumbrians (875), and then the “sharing out” of the land of the Northumbrians (876), the Mercians (877) and East Angles (880). The annals for the 880s track the movements of a Viking army on the continent, in the knowledge that it would return to Alfred’s kingdom in 892.⁸⁸

The completion and publication of the “common stock” of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, in 892, led directly to the production of Asser’s *Life of Alfred* in 893.⁸⁹ It is a deeply interesting and even artfully constructed work, which with all its peculiarities and limitations exudes a sense of its special value as a compelling portrait of the king, written by one who knew him well.⁹⁰ As one might expect, Asser was influenced by portrayals of kingship in the Old Testament, and by conventions familiar from hagiography; it is also abundantly clear that he had perused Einhard’s *Life of Charlemagne* and in certain respects used it as a model. No less interesting is the use that he would appear to have made of the *Life of Alcuin*, produced by a monk of Ferrières in the 820s; he might also have learnt about Alcuin from Grimbold and John, or indeed from a collection of Alcuin’s letters.⁹¹ It remains the case, however, that Asser portrays

87 Keynes, “Tale of Two Kings,” 196–201.

88 The viewpoint of a chronicler, c. 890, would account naturally for other indications of redaction some time or long after the event: the three ships of “Northmen” which arrived in 789 are described in the same annal as “the first ships of Danish men which came to the land of the English”; in 851 Æthelwulf and the West Saxons “inflicted the greatest slaughter on a heathen army that we ever heard of until this present day.”

89 Keynes, “Alfred and the Mercians,” 40–41. The question is whether copies of the *Chronicle* were circulated in the same way as copies of the *Pastoral Care*; for the latter, see Keynes, “Power of the Written Word,” 193–196, and Pratt, *Political Thought*, 180–185, with references.

90 The study of Asser’s *Life of Alfred* is set on a new footing by T.M. Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons 350–1064* (Oxford: 2013), 452–466, with further references.

91 K&L, *Alfred*, 265 n. 195. For the *Vita Alcuini*, see *Clavis des auteurs latins du moyen âge: Territoire Français 735–987*, II: *Alcuin*, ed. M.-H. Hélène Jullien and F. Perelman (Turnhout: 1999), 7–8, and Donald A. Bullough, *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation* (Leiden: 2004),

the king in a way which suited his own purposes, which were to convey information of a certain kind about the king himself, and about the author's standing with the king, presumably to his own advantage, and that of the king, and for the instruction of whatever readership or audience(s) he had in mind.

A chronological framework was constructed by Asser with a series of Latin annals based on the *Chronicle* for the years from 849 to 887, arranged in five blocks (Chapters 3–11, 17–21, 26–28, 30–72, 82–86), with certain errors, alterations, additions and connections (all of interest in themselves). Into this framework Asser inserted six blocks of material of a more personal or discursive nature: one at the beginning (Chapters 1–2, on Alfred's parentage); four at appropriate points in the sequence of annals (Chapters 12–16, tales of Æthelbald and Æthelwulf; Chapters 22–25, Alfred's infancy and boyhood; Chapter 29, his marriage; Chapters 73–81, Alfred's *res gestae*); and one at the end (Chapters 87–106, Alfred's reading, and governance).⁹² Although the work begins with a salutation addressed to the king, it seems unlikely that the intended readership was the king himself and those at his court; rather, the work would appear to have been composed, in the first instance, for the author's friends and associates in Wales.⁹³ Asser refers to Alfred's predecessors, accurately enough, as kings "of the (West) Saxons," yet in those annals where Asser accords Alfred a royal style, he is consistently king "of the Anglo-Saxons," starting with the annal for 882.⁹⁴ Another striking feature is the provision of a dual chronology, in which events are dated by their year in the Christian era

17–34. Nor should one forget the overtures made by Lupus of Ferrières to King Æthelwulf, through Felix, formerly the king's secretary. For Alcuin's letters, see *Alcuin*, ed. Jullien and Ferleman, 171–355, with references; Bullough, *Alcuin*, 35–120; and Stephen Allott, *Alcuin of York* (York: 1974).

92 The references here are to the chapters of Stevenson's edition. There are many discrepancies, however, between these divisions and the distinctions suggested by aspects of layout and script in the Parkerian transcript (c. 1570) of the lost Cottonian manuscript (itself a copy, c. 1000); so the standard edition (and translations derived from it) may not accurately reflect, at this level, the author's own conception of his work. For images of the transcript, see "Parker Library on the Web" (Stanford).

93 K&L, *Alfred*, 56, and Keynes, "Alfred and the Mercians," 41–44, with reference to other views. For evidence that Asser's *Life of Alfred* was used by Gerald of Wales, see Keynes, "Power of the Written Word," 181 n. 31.

94 K&L, *Alfred*, 38–41 and 227–228, with Keynes, "Alfred and the Mercians," 43 n. 199. Alfred is also called "king of the Anglo-Saxons," and "ruler of all the Christians of the island of Britain," in the salutation, and "king of the Anglo-Saxons" in Chapters 13 and 21, with reference in each case to the king in Asser's own day.

(the *Annus Domini*), followed by the corresponding number in an “Alfredian” era (i.e. Alfred’s age).⁹⁵ No less significant is the fact that throughout his work Asser represents the opposing parties as “pagans” and “Christians,” thus elevating the struggle to one with which the Welsh themselves could identify.⁹⁶ It must be admitted, however, that his statements (especially if taken literally) do not always make sense, or accord with other evidence. He does not mention the work of those who compiled the *Chronicle*, and one wishes he had said more about Grimbold. He writes of the king’s concern for the administration of justice but does not mention the law-code. He mentions Wærferth’s translation of Pope Gregory’s *Dialogues*, but not the translation of Gregory’s *Pastoral Care*, or indeed the program of translations of books “most necessary for all men to know.” Asser was well placed to know far more than he was concerned to transmit to his readers; but his approach is idiosyncratic, rather than systematic, objective, or evenly balanced, and it would be dangerous to infer much from his silence about one thing or another.⁹⁷

Asser’s account of King Alfred’s *res gestae* (Chapters 73–81), inserted between his translation of the chronicler’s annals for 885 and 886, brings us to what is arguably the heart of his work. The wording in Chapter 73 (“de uita et moribus et aequa conuersatione, atque, ex parte non modica, res gestae domini mei Ælfredi, Anglusaxonum regis”) is adapted directly from the opening words of Einhard’s *Life of Charlemagne*, suggesting strongly that an implicit analogy with the Frankish emperor was now in Asser’s mind.⁹⁸ The only explicit comparison is, significantly, between Alfred and Solomon (Chapter 76). Asser also gives here an account of Alfred’s recruitment of learned men from Mercia and from Gaul (Chapters 77–8), leading into an account of how he was himself summoned from the “westernmost and furthest parts of Britain (*de occiduis et ultimis Britanniae finibus*)” (Chapters 79–81). In certain respects Asser’s account of his own arrival at Alfred’s court echoes the story of Charlemagne’s recruitment of Alcuin, as told in the anonymous *Life of Alcuin* (Chapter 9); and if Asser saw his relationship with the king in such a way, that is in itself a matter

95 K&L, *Alfred*, 230 n. 11.

96 K&L, *Alfred*, 42 and 230–231; Keynes, “Alfred and the Mercians,” 44.

97 Alfred’s law-code and the OE *Pastoral Care* have been dated after 893 because they are not mentioned by Asser; see Wormald, *Making of Law*, 286, and Godden, “Stories,” 126.

98 K&L, *Alfred*, 88 and 254 n. 139. The heading given to the text in the Parkerian transcript (“Ælfredi Res gestæ authore Asser”), which reaches back to the *Res gestae divi Augusti*, and is duly echoed by Stevenson (*De rebus gestis Ælfredi*), seems unlikely to have been the title given to the work by Asser himself, though might have been suggested by Asser’s usage in Chapter 73.

of some historical importance.⁹⁹ Einhard's own account of Charlemagne's interest in the promotion of learning is judged to be misleading in significant respects, but the question, in the immediate late ninth-century Anglo-Saxon context, is how knowledge of Charlemagne's various accomplishments might have reached England, in whatever form, at any time from the 850s onwards.¹⁰⁰ Charlemagne is said to have invited lovers of wisdom from different parts of the world to help him, and it is hard to believe that stories to this effect were not known at Alfred's court in the 880s, and that Alfred would not have been eager, of his own accord, to follow Charlemagne's example.¹⁰¹ The learned men from Mercia, from Gaul and from Wales who joined Alfred at his "Anglo-Saxon" court may pale into insignificance beside the renowned scholars who assembled for the Carolingian Renaissance, yet enough is known of them for us to be sure that they were more than a figment of Asser's imagination, and indeed that their presence at Alfred's court is as well founded as it is significant for our understanding of all that was the follow.¹⁰²

After the annals for 886–887 (Chapters 82–86), Asser provides a second discursive section on Alfred's governance (Chapters 87–106), taking him to the end of his work. The section begins, most interestingly, with Asser's account of what he claims to have been his own role in helping the king to read Latin, and to translate from Latin into English.¹⁰³ Perhaps he was aware of the help given by Alcuin to Charlemagne in connection with the compilation of a prayer book suitable for use by the king, and told his own story of the help he gave to Alfred in connection with the king's "handbook."¹⁰⁴ There follows a perceptive

99 Above, 35–36, n. 91. Godden, "Stories," 138, observes that Asser's use in Chapter 79 of the phrase "de occiduis et ultimis Britanniae finibus" echoes Alcuin, *Epistula* 229 (*Alcuin*, ed. Jullien and Perelman, 307; Allott, *Alcuin*, 83–85), written in 801, in which he recalls how he came to Charlemagne "from the furthest parts of Britain (*de ultimis Brittaniae finibus*)."

100 Einhard writes of Charlemagne's interest in Latin and Greek, names Peter of Pisa and Alcuin ("the most learned man in the entire world") among his teachers, and tells of his belated attempt to learn how to write; see *Life of Charlemagne*, Chapter 25, in Paul Edward Dutton, *Charlemagne's Courtier* (Peterborough: 1998), 32. His account echoes Suetonius's account of the Emperor Augustus (Chapter 89), but it also simplifies a more complex reality. For further discussion, see McKitterick, *Charlemagne*, 15–16, and esp. 347–350.

101 Alcuin says as much, explicitly, in *Epistula* 229, cited above (n. 99), written in 801; see also Walahfrid Strabo's prologue to Einhard, in Denton, *Charlemagne's Courtier*, 7–8.

102 For a different interpretation of Asser's account of Alfred's "recruitment" of scholars, see Godden, "Stories," 132–139.

103 Asser, Chapters 87–90, discussed above, 29–30.

104 For Alcuin's work on the prayer book, see *Vita Alcuini*, Chapter 15, with Alcuin, *Epistula* 304 (*Alcuin*, ed. Jullien and Perelman, 344; Allott, *Alcuin*, 99), addressed to Charlemagne (or Charles the Younger); see also McKitterick, *Charlemagne*, 330–331.

explanation of the considerable difficulties which the king had to endure or to confront in pursuit of his objectives (Chapter 91), leading to further coverage of his accomplishments and governance (Chapters 92–106). At this point, the work comes to an abrupt though seemingly deliberate end, leaving untouched the annals in the *Chronicle* for 888–892 (assuming they were in Asser's copy). One can understand why Asser had broken into the sequence of annals after Chapter 86, and why, having written Chapters 91–106 at a time (in 893) when the Vikings were perhaps already threatening the south-west, he should have stopped at this point – quitting, as it were, while Alfred was ahead. The narrative was left some distance behind a final section of discursive content, which was itself crucial to Asser's larger purpose; and perhaps the question is not whether the work is incomplete, but what message might Asser have intended to convey *here* to his audience in Wales. His portrait of Alfred is complex, and contradictory, but it is also compelling and even convincing. The genuine Asser brings us closer than we might think to the genuine Alfred.

Alfred's Closing Years

The account of the campaign against the Danes in 893–896 forms the first continuation to the “common stock” of the *Chronicle*.¹⁰⁵ The narrative is fuller than for the 870s, and far better informed, reflecting the difference between a set of annals put together some years after the events (870s), and a record of a shorter period composed immediately afterwards by someone who had been close to the centre of events (893–896). It is clear from the outset that the kingdom's defenses were more effective than before, and that the English were working well with each other, and with the Welsh; the annals also afford solid evidence of Alfred's own resourcefulness and leadership in time of war. The Danes dispersed in the summer of 896. According to the chronicler, “the enemy (*here*) had not – by God's grace! – afflicted the English people to a very great extent.” Alfred and those around him might well have been minded and might even have been able, therefore, to press forward with other plans while the Danes were still at large in the kingdom. He seems latterly to have been based at Winchester, where his outlook might have been broadened further in the company of Grimbold, in particular, and perhaps also of the priests Æthelstan, Wærwulf and John. He died on 26 October 899, and was buried in the Old

105 K&L, *Alfred*, 42–43, 114–119 and 279–280; Nicholas Brooks, “Why Is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* about Kings?” *ASE* 39 (2011): 43–70, at 49.

Minster, Winchester, pending the completion of the New Minster close by.¹⁰⁶ As the chronicler had put it: “He was king over the whole English people, except for that part which was under Danish rule.”¹⁰⁷

The Alfredian Legacy

In the Old English version of Boethius’s *Consolation of Philosophy*, “Mind” avers that he had not been attracted by worldly power, as if merely for its own sake. He explains what kind of people were necessary for exercising the power which had been entrusted to him (men who pray, men who fight, and men who work), and what resources were required for their maintenance; and he concludes by stating that his wish had been to live honourably, and to leave to those who came after “the remembrance of me in good works” (*min gemynd on godum weorcum*).¹⁰⁸ “Wisdom” responds with a lengthy disquisition on the futility of fame, especially of one man in relation to all others, or across the whole of time. The words assigned to “Mind” seem nonetheless to represent an Alfredian articulation of a view of kingship which might well have arisen within the context of a contemporary reality.

What, then, of Alfred’s legacy? The Alfredian kingdom “of the Anglo-Saxons,” in itself a significant development from the ancient kingdom of the West Saxons, with its mid-ninth-century south-eastern extension, survived Alfred’s death. Indeed, it persisted (with further extension) throughout the reign of his son Edward the Elder (899–924), into the opening years of the reign of his grandson Æthelstan, and was not superseded until Æthelstan established his kingdom “of the English” in 927.¹⁰⁹ In other words, the kingdom endured in one form or another for 40 years, until itself overtaken by events. It had provided the context, perhaps, for the introduction of a general oath of loyalty to the king, for the production and first use of the so-called “Second Anglo-Saxon coronation *ordo*,” and for Archbishop Plegmund’s re-organisation of the West Saxon bishoprics.¹¹⁰ It had established a secure basis for the successful defence

106 *Liber Vitae*, ed. Keynes, 17–18. For his bones, see Keynes, “Cult of Alfred,” 325–327 and 345–346.

107 K&L, *Alfred*, 120.

108 K&L, *Alfred*, 132–133, with 298; *Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 1, 277–278, and see commentary in vol. 2, 316–319; Pratt, *Political Thought*, 264–307, esp. 293–295.

109 Simon Keynes, “Edward, King of the Anglo-Saxons,” *Edward the Elder 899–924*, ed. N.J. Higham and D.H. Hill (London: 2001), 40–66; see also *WB-EnASE*, 533–537 (Appendix I).

110 For the oath, see K&L, *Alfred*, 266 n. 200 and 306 n. 6, and Pratt, *Political Thought*, 239. For the view that the “Second Ordo” was first used for Edward, in 900, see Keynes, “King Alfred

of the kingdom in the 890s, and served well thereafter for the campaign against the Danes who had settled in eastern England, in which Æthelred, ealdorman of the Mercians, and his wife Æthelflæd (Alfred's daughter), would play such an important part.¹¹¹ It would be dangerous, of course, to imagine that many problems did not lie ahead. The "Parker Chronicle" represents a view from Winchester, towards the middle of the tenth century; and what might one give for a view from Mercia, from East Anglia, or indeed from Northumbria?¹¹² The years from 939 to 959 were especially difficult, as suggested by the combined evidence of law-codes, charters and coins.¹¹³ Yet the principle proved to be a good one: just as London had been at the heart of the kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons from its earliest days in the 880s, so too it would come by the end of the tenth century to be at the heart of the kingdom of the English.

Alfred's program for the revival of religion, learning and literacy was itself a product of the establishment of the kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons, and its longer-term consequences were themselves inseparable from the "political" aspects of his legacy. It is hard enough to detect, let alone to follow, any threads of evidence running through the first quarter of the tenth century; but both the secular and the ecclesiastical orders are likely to have felt the effects of Alfredian initiatives. It is in part a story of raised awareness of past accomplishments, and of continued contact with persons and places outside the

and the Mercians," 36–37, and "Edward," 48–49. For the revival of an older view that it was first used for Æthelstan, in 925, see Wormald, *Making of Law*, 447 n. 114; Janet Nelson, "The First Use of the Second Anglo-Saxon *Ordo*," *Myth, Rulership, Church and Charters*, ed. Julia Barrow and Andrew Wareham (Aldershot: 2008), 117–126; and Sarah Foot, *Æthelstan: the First King of England* (London, 2011), 74–77. See also Pratt, *Political Thought*, 75–78. For Plegmund's reorganization, see Keynes, "Edward," 50, and *Atlas of Attestations*, Table XXXIII.

- 111 The campaign of 910–920 marked an early stage in the so-called "reconquest" of the Danelaw – a misnomer not because it was in fact a "conquest" by the "West Saxons" (Wormald, "*Engla Lond*," 365), but because the "Danelaw" did not come into existence until after the land had been reconquered by the *English*. New administrative arrangements for the lands between the Thames and the Humber might have been introduced as part or in the aftermath of the same process; see S. Keynes, "Shire," in *WB-EnASE*, 434–435.
- 112 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 173, known as "the Parker Chronicle and Laws" (see Irvine, below, Chapter 12); see also Keynes, "Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*," 541–542.
- 113 For the coins, see C.E. Blunt, B.H.I.H. Stewart, and C.C.S. Lyon, *Coinage in Tenth-Century England from Edward the Elder to Edgar's Reform* (London: 1989), with S. Keynes, "Edgar," *Edgar, King of the English 959–975: New Interpretations*, ed. Donald Scragg (Woodbridge: 2008), 3–58, at 23–24.

kingdom; it is also a story of the import, production, dissemination and use of books. The challenge is to identify the key players in the early tenth century; to establish a case for the significance of one religious house or another; and to assess what new administrative practices lay behind the campaigns of the 910s. Winchester flourished under royal patronage; yet in the event, the literate culture which emerged in the later 920s and 930s, during the reign of King Æthelstan, seems to have had more diverse origins. Two Mercian ealdormen who flourished in the late ninth and early tenth centuries deserve their own places in the unfolding story of pragmatic literacy; another place belongs to Ordlafe, ealdorman of Wiltshire.¹¹⁴ It is as if we begin to glimpse elements of an emerging order. The royal diploma, in Latin, was reinvented in the late 920s for the greater glory of King Æthelstan, and after some modification went on in the central decades of the tenth century to enjoy its finest hour. Yet while diplomas were the most durable products of royal assemblies, they should not deflect our attention from everything else which took place on such occasions, involving ritual, networking and the spoken word, or from the extent to which in the tenth century business was conducted and carried forward with the help of an increasingly wide and more formalized range of vernacular documentation. It is from an Alfredian context that we have a well-known if tantalizing reference to the use of a letter in association with a seal.¹¹⁵ The seal-matrices issued to or obtained by certain laymen, and some religious women, in the later tenth and early eleventh centuries belong to the same world; and the question arises whether we have here another product of an “Alfredian” example or initiative.¹¹⁶

114 For the ealdormen, see Simon Keynes, “Church Councils, Royal Assemblies, and Anglo-Saxon Royal Diplomas,” *Kingship and Power in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. G. Owen-Crocker and B. Schneider (Woodbridge: 2013), 17–182, at 73–74, citing S 1442, from Worcester, and S 367, edited in *Charters of Christ Church Canterbury*, ed. Brooks and Kelly, pp. 837–845 (no. 101). For Ordlafe, see the “Fonthill Letter” (S 1445), edited with discussion in *Charters of Christ Church Canterbury*, ed. Brooks and Kelly, pp. 852–862 (no. 104); see also Simon Keynes, “The Fonthill Letter,” *Words, Texts and Manuscripts*, ed. Michael Korhammer (Cambridge: 1992), 53–97; Scott Thompson Smith, “Of Kings and Cattle Thieves: The Rhetorical Work of the Fonthill Letter,” *JEGP* 106 (2007): 447–467; and Mechthild Gretsch, “Literacy and the Uses of the Vernacular,” *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, ed. Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: 2013), 273–294, at 283–284.

115 K&L, *Alfred*, 141 and 300.

116 Keynes, *Diplomas*, 138–140, and “Royal Government and the Written Word in Late Anglo-Saxon England,” in *The Uses of Literacy in Early Mediaeval Europe*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: 1990), 226–257, at 244–247.

Alfred's legacy extended also to the example of himself (albeit to some extent a literary construction) as one who against the odds had become a man of learning, who had endured various forms of adversity, and who had emerged victorious from an extended struggle against the Danes. Writing perhaps *before* the intensification of the Viking raids in the 990s, Æthelweard, ealdorman of the western shires, remembered Alfred as the "unshakeable pillar (*immobilis postis*)" of the western people, "a man full of justice, active in war, learned in speech, steeped in sacred literature above all things," who turned "unknown numbers of books" from Latin into his own language.¹¹⁷ Writing some years later, Ælfric, monk of Cerne, wrote of Alfred that "he often fought against the Danes, until he won the victory and protected his people."¹¹⁸ It is not clear whether Æthelweard and Ælfric were familiar with Asser's portrayal of the king, or whether they represent an independent view. Asser's work was, however, readily accessible at the time; indeed, the copy on which we depend (albeit now indirectly) was itself made c. 1000, when the Danes were doing again what they had done before. Byrhtferth, monk of Ramsey, made extensive use of Asser's text in compiling his 'Historical Miscellany', and was effusive in his own praise of the king.¹¹⁹ Alfred is represented as one deeply committed to the pursuit of learning, and in this respect as an example for the secular clergy of Byrhtferth's day; he is also recognized as one who increased the extent of his kingdom.¹²⁰ No explicit comparison is made between Alfred, in the late ninth century, and Æthelred, in the early eleventh; but Æthelweard, Ælfric and Byrhtferth were singing in harmony from the same sheet, which suggests strongly that Alfred's example was seen already as a good one for others to follow.

117 *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. A. Campbell (London, 1962), 51, with Mechthild Gretsch, "Historiography and Literary Patronage in Late Anglo-Saxon England: the Evidence of Æthelweard's *Chronicon*," *ASE* 41 (2013 [for 2012]): 205–248.

118 *The Old English Version of the Heptateuch, Ælfric's Treatise on the Old and New Testament and his Preface to Genesis*, ed. S.J. Crawford (London: 1922), 416.

119 Keynes, "Authenticity of Asser," 537–538, and "Cult of Alfred," 228.

120 *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, II: *Historia Regum*, ed. Thomas Arnold (London: 1885), 74, 81 and 89–91 (developed by Byrhtferth from Asser, Chapter 91, with reference also to Boethius).

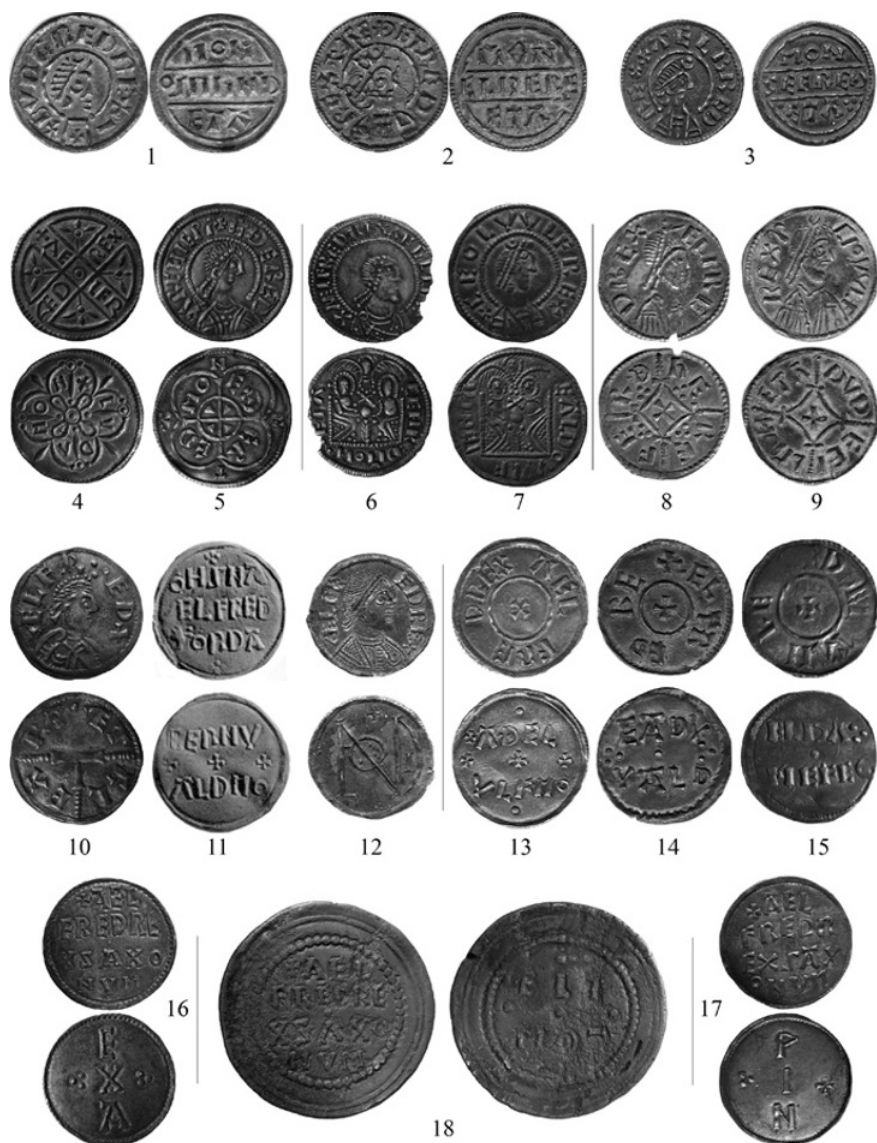


PLATE 1.1 *The coinage of King Alfred and his contemporaries, c. 865–900*

Appendix

Coinage of the Alfredian Period

The coinage of the Alfredian period is represented on the accompanying plate by the types current in each of three periods (early, middle and late). The principal mints were at London (for the king of Mercia) and at Canterbury (for the king of Wessex and Kent).

TOP ROW (three coins, obverse to the left and reverse to the right)

First period (c. 865–875). Coins of the *Lunette* type continued to be struck at London for King Burgred of Mercia, though some were struck there for King Æthelred I (d. 871) and for his brother King Alfred. *Lunette* coins were also struck at Canterbury, for Archbishop Ceolnoth (833–870), for Æthelred I, and for Alfred.

1. Burgred, *Lunette* type, moneyer Osmund (London). FWM (*MEC* 1336)
2. Æthelred, *Lunette* type, moneyer Ælfhere (Canterbury). FWM (ex Blunt)
3. Alfred, *Lunette* type, moneyer Sefred (Canterbury). FWM (*MEC* 1350)

SECOND ROW (six coins, obverse above and reverse below)

Second period (c. 875–880). Moneyers at London struck coins for King Ceolwulf II of Mercia (*Two Emperors*, *Cross-and-Lozenge*), and for Alfred (*Geometric-Quatrefoil*, *Two Emperors*, *Cross-and-Lozenge*). Moneyers at Canterbury struck coins of the *Portrait-Quatrefoil* type for Archbishop Æthelred (870–888), and for Alfred (not shown), and coins of the *Cross-and-Lozenge* type for Archbishop Æthelred (not shown) and for Alfred (not shown).

4. Alfred, *Geometric-Quatrefoil* type, moneyer Luda (London). BM (Assheton loan); B&K 1
5. Archbishop Æthelred, *Portrait-Quatrefoil* type. BM (BMC 61); B&K 2
6. Alfred, *Two Emperors* type, moneyer Cenred (London). BM (BMA 476); B&K 5
7. Ceolwulf, *Two Emperors* type, moneyer Ealdwulf. BM (Assheton loan); B&K 6
8. Alfred, *Cross-and-Lozenge* type, moneyer Hereferth (London). FWM (*MEC* 1352); B&K 24
9. Ceolwulf, *Cross-and-Lozenge* type, moneyer Dudecil. FWM (ex Blunt); B&K 34

THIRD ROW (six coins, obverse above and reverse below)

Third period (c. 880–900). These coins (10–14) represent the coinage of the Alfredian kingdom ‘of the Anglo-Saxons’: the mint-signed types from Gloucester (10), Oxford (11) and London (12), and the *Two-Line* type (13–14). Coins of the *Two-Line* type were struck in Alfred’s name at London, Canterbury and elsewhere; also at Canterbury for archbishops Æthelred (–888) and Plegmund (890–). They are joined here by a coin of ‘Edelstan rex’ (15), the name taken after baptism by Guthrum, king of the Danes settled in East Anglia (c. 880–890), which imitates Alfred’s *Two-Line* type.

10. Alfred, at Gloucester (*æt Gleawa*). BM (*BMC* 80)
11. Alfred, at Oxford (*Ohnsaforða*), moneyer Bernwald. BM (*BMC* 127)
12. Alfred, *London Monogram* type. FWM (*MEC* 1355)
13. Alfred, *Two-Line* type, moneyer Æthelwulf. FWM (*MEC* 1361), ‘Winchester’ style
14. Alfred, *Two-Line* type, moneyer Eadwald. FWM (*MEC* 1363), ‘West Mercian’ style
15. Æthelstan [Guthrum], *Two-Line* type, ‘Elda me fecit’. FWM (ex Blunt)

BOTTOM ROW (two coins, either side of the much larger ‘offering piece’)

Third period (c. 880–900). There was also a distinctive mint-signed type in Wessex, on which Alfred was styled ‘king of the (West) Saxons’, as in the king’s law-code, and his will.

16. Alfred, ‘rex Saxonum’, at Exeter. BM (Morley St Peter hoard [SCBI 26, 43])
17. Alfred, ‘rex Saxonum’, at Winchester. BM (Morley St Peter hoard [SCBI 26, 45])
18. Alfred, ‘rex Saxonum’, offering piece, inscribed ‘ELI/MO[SINA]’ (alms). BM (*BMC* 158)

I am grateful to Dr Rory Naismith for his invaluable assistance in the making of this plate. The coins are drawn from the collections in the Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, and in the Department of Coins and Medals, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and are reproduced with their kind permission.

Abbreviations. *BMC* = Greuber and Keary, British Museum Catalogue, supplemented by *BMA* (British Museum Acquisitions); *B&K* = Blackburn and Keynes, ‘Corpus of *Cross-and-Lozenge* and Related Coinages’; *FWM* = Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; *MEC* = *Medieval European Coinage* (Cambridge); *SCBI* = *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles*, with volume number and number of coin.

The Art of Alfred and His Times¹

Leslie Webster

The *Codex Aureus* in the Royal Library at Stockholm (Kungliga Bibliotek MS A.135) is a magnificently illuminated Gospel book made at Canterbury around the middle of the eighth century, famous not only for its splendid decoration and elegant script, but for the remarkable inscription which was added to the golden Chi-Rho page (fol. 11r), sometime during the reign of King Alfred.² It records the ransom paid ‘in pure gold’ by Alfred, ealdorman of Surrey, and his wife Wærburh (both c. 871–899), to redeem this and other holy books from the heathen army which had looted them and held them hostage. The inscription records that it was presented by the couple to the high altar of Christ Church—almost certainly Christ Church, Canterbury—and is thus fittingly entered on the page of St Matthew’s Gospel that tells of Christ’s incarnation.

The redeeming of this great manuscript, made over a hundred years before Alfred came to the throne, testifies to the piety of its aristocratic rescuers, and perhaps also reflects the impact of Alfred’s campaign to renew religious study and devotion not only among the bishops, monks and clergy, but among his nobles and their families. But it also illustrates a striking paradox that lies at the heart of any discussion of the art of Alfred’s reign. It is one of those many old treasures of the church, the grand bibles, mass books and other religious texts that testified to the learning and piety of earlier generations of clergy, the decline in which the king so famously deplored in his preface to the translation of Gregory the Great’s *Regula Pastoralis*.³ But its very magnificence is in stark contrast to the surviving manuscripts which were the physical embodiment and necessary tools of the king’s programme of reform. Those few decorated manuscripts that might be ascribed to Alfred’s reign are in impact utterly different from the *Codex Aureus* and other Anglo-Saxon decorated manuscripts of the later eighth and early ninth century; their ornamentation is simple and

- 1 This chapter incorporates and updates some material previously published by the author in Leslie Webster, ‘*Ædificia nova*: Treasures of Alfred’s reign,’ in *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences*, ed. Timothy Reuter, Studies in Early Medieval Britain. (Aldershot: 2003), 79–103.
- 2 See J.G.G. Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts, Sixth to the Ninth Century*, A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles 1 (London: 1978), no. 30; Leslie Webster and Janet Backhouse (eds.), *The Making of England: Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture AD 600–900* (London: 1991), no. 154.
- 3 K&L, 124–126.

modest, as befits their particular intellectual purpose, which is not to do with show or display, but with the serious business of education, the getting of wisdom. The evidence for Alfredian metalwork and sculpture is also problematic— not in terms of quality, but of quantity. We are told in Asser's *Life* that the king commissioned ambitious and elaborate goldsmith's work, "treasures (*ædificia*) incomparably fashioned in gold and silver at his instigation"; the gold and silver reliquaries and other church furnishings that these *ædificia* probably represented were an integral part of his programme of intellectual and religious renewal, intended to replace the treasures which had perished when everything was, in Alfred's account, ransacked and burned during the long Viking wars.⁴ Yet hardly anything of this body of goldsmiths' work survives, or of ambitious works in other media, to stand comparison with the surviving examples of church metalwork, sculpture, textiles, and bone and ivory carvings from the later eighth and early ninth centuries.⁵

What we know of Alfred, and particularly of his concerns for the renewal of learning and spiritual regeneration, poses a particular problem for anyone rash enough to attempt a survey of the art associated with the achievements of his reign. Little survives that can be directly accredited to the period of his reign, still less to his agency; yet the powerful and insistent testimony of Asser's *Life*, and of the texts generated by Alfred himself, suggest a very different picture. This was a king who furnished his churches with treasures of every kind, who brought foreign craftsmen to his court, who initiated a programme of educational renewal, and whose deep concern with the ways in which the physical facilitated the spiritual is not only manifest in the writings associated with him, but was reflected in his own creations.⁶ The gap between Asser's admiring accounts and those relatively few artefacts that can with reasonable confidence be assigned to Alfred's reign is a wide one, and bridging it requires a certain amount of tightrope-walking.

Apart from a contemporary copy of Alfred's translation of the *Regula Pastoralis* (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Hatton 20), and the Alfred Jewel, which bears an inscription associating it with Alfred, and which may have

4 K&L, 101 (Asser, *Life*, cap. 91). For a discussion of Asser's use of the word *aedificium*, here translated as treasure, see K&L, note 114, 249–250 and Webster, "*Ædificia nova*," 79–80.

5 See, for an indication of the scale and nature of surviving works of art from late eighth-century Mercia, Webster and Backhouse, *The Making of England*, 193–253; and Michelle Brown and Carole Farr (eds.), *Mercia: An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe* (London: 2001).

6 For Alfred's interest in commissioning special artefacts, see David Pratt, "Persuasion and Invention at the Court of King Alfred the Great" in *Court Culture in the Early Middle Ages: Proceedings of the First Alcuin Conference*, ed. Catherine Cubitt (Turnhout: 2003), 189–222; also Webster "*Ædificia nova*," 79–103.

accompanied another copy, there are almost no decorated manuscripts and other art works for which an absolute dating to the later ninth century can be assigned; no decorated metalwork from coin-dated hoards, no sculpture from independently dated architectural or archaeological contexts. Other plausibly Alfredian artefacts can only be assigned to the corpus by virtue of their association with or similarity to the few independently datable artefacts, a relative dating which is inevitably less objective, and less robust. Nevertheless, despite these restrictions, and small as the identifiable corpus is, the art products of Alfred's reign can be argued to have their own distinctive style and character, different from what went before, enabling us to gain some glimpses of the likely nature of those *ædificia* which have not survived.

In what follows, I have therefore focussed on a small group of high-status objects which can be directly or indirectly linked to new ideas current in Alfred's reign, in order to highlight their distinctive character, and to give a sense of how art was employed in the service of those ideas.

That Alfred's novel treasures were unusual, indeed exceptional, is made very clear by Asser; alongside the pressing business of government and reconstruction, the king found time to instruct all his goldsmiths and craftsmen, and to commission "to his own design, the most wonderful and precious new treasures (*ædificia nova*)," and (as noted above) "treasures incomparably fashioned in gold and silver."⁷ Asser is at pains to demonstrate Alfred's enquiring cast of mind, displayed in inventions such as the horn lantern and the candle clock, and we see something of this also in the additions incorporated into the Old English translation of Orosius's *Historiarum adversum Paganos Libri Septem* made under the king's direction, which show his interest in the accounts of distant seas and strange cultures given by the far-travelling traders Ohthere and Wulfstan.⁸ Particular note is made of the walruses of these northern seas, hunted for their hide, which made excellent ship-ropes, and for the very fine ivory from their tusks, some of which were presented to the king by Ohthere. There is a sense here of Alfred's grasp of the potential of this source of valuable new raw materials; the hides were of understandable interest to a king who had taken such pains to equip his fighting ships, but it is interesting that the

7 "Ædificia...venerabilia et pretiosiora nova...sua machinatione," Asser's *Life of King Alfred, together with the Annals of St Neots, erroneously ascribed to Asser*, ed. William Henry Stevenson (1904; reprinted with article by Dorothy Whitelock, Oxford: 1959), cap. 76; see also K&L, 91.

8 For Alfred's inventions, see K&L, 108–109 (Asser, *Life*, cap. 104); and see also Pratt "Persuasion and Invention," 201–206. For Ohthere and Wulfstan, see *Two Voyagers at the Court of King Alfred. The Ventures of Ohthere and Wulfstan together with the Description of Northern Europe from the Old English Orosius*, ed. Niels Lund and trans. Christine E. Fell (York: 1984).

ivory too is noted, as a medium for prestige ivory carving. Although no such ivories can as yet be attributed to the reign of Alfred, it is in the first half of the tenth century that we see walrus ivory beginning to replace coarser bone and antler as the preferred medium for fine small-scale carving, and it is reasonable to suspect that its use would have been encouraged and promoted by the king. This, and the other testimony to the king's curiosity and inventiveness, firmly place his original cast of mind as a significant factor in his direct involvement in the design and construction of religious artefacts, and worthy settings for them.

The other important factor in shaping the nature of art in Alfred's reign came from across the Channel. In his programme of cultural and religious restoration, as with his military and governmental reforms, Alfred was greatly influenced by Carolingian models, his English programme of learned *renovatio* echoing that of Charlemagne and his successors. Just as Charlemagne a century earlier had brought Alcuin from York to his court, Alfred imported continental scholars, most famously John the Old Saxon and Grimbold of St Bertin, to assist in his religious revival. But equally important, he also brought in craftsmen from abroad, to replace not only artefacts but also the skills which had been lost through years of negligence and warfare. He valued these foreign craftsmen so much that he allocated a sixth of his annual revenues to the upkeep of "craftsmen skilled in every earthly craft...whom he had assembled and commissioned in almost countless quantity from many races."⁹ Influences from Frankia which can be seen in some of the artefacts that can be associated with Alfred's reign are likely to reflect ideas and models imported via such craftsmen, and the continental scholars at the court.

Equally significant for the art of his reign were Alfred's own first-hand encounters with the art of the Carolingian court, and of Rome itself; the opportunity arose during his two journeys to Rome, in 853, when he was four, and again in 855/6, when according to Asser, he accompanied his father Æthelwulf (king of Wessex 839–858).¹⁰ The latter trip also involved a stay at the Frankish court of Charles the Bald (840–877), while Æthelwulf contracted his marriage to Judith, Charles's daughter, but it seems inconceivable that the young Alfred and his retinue would not have also made a diplomatic stopover in at the Frankish court on his first journey as well. As the marriage of Æthelwulf to the daughter of the Frankish king implies, there was already a close relationship

9 K&L, 106 (Asser, *Life*, cap. 101).

10 K&L, 69–70 (Asser, *Life*, cap. 11); see also Simon Keynes, "Anglo-Saxon Entries in the 'Liber Vitae' of Brescia" in *Alfred the Wise: Studies in Honour of Janet Bately on the Occasion of her sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. Jane Roberts (Woodbridge: 1997), 99–119, especially 112–114.

between the Wessex dynasty and their Carolingian counterparts, which went back at least to the time of Æthelwulf's father Ecgberht—who, according to William of Malmesbury, while exiled in Frankia, learnt the art of government from the Franks and acquired "a civility of manners very different from the barbarity of his native land."¹¹ These close ties are illustrated by Æthelwulf's donations to Charles the Bald's favoured shrine at Saint-Denis which are detailed in a charter of 857 (Sawyer 318), which confirms gifts of land at Rotherfield, Hastings, Pevensey and London to the abbey of Saint-Denis. The earliest surviving copy dates to the thirteenth century and has been long thought to be spurious; more recently, however, it has been plausibly argued that it may be based on an authentic earlier record.¹² The existence of a very rare church dedication to St Denis at Rotherfield lends some credence to the possibility that this charter may indeed reflect a genuine tradition of links between Æthelwulf and the Carolingian royal abbey; Charles the Bald became lay abbot of Saint-Denis in 867, but his devotion to the shrine can reasonably be presumed to antedate this by some years. He made numerous lavish and extraordinary gifts to the shrine (see below 59–64), and Æthelwulf himself had particularly good reason in 857 to emulate this with his own gifts to Saint-Denis, given his marriage to the Frankish king's daughter Judith the year before. These donations consisted of twenty marks of gold, a silver vessel of the same weight, and two palliums, purple in colour.¹³ Such gifts to Charles' favoured shrine marked the importance of the bonds between the Wessex dynasty and the Carolingian emperor, which would doubtless also have been accompanied by reciprocal personal gifts.

Æthelwulf's gifts to St Peter's on the occasion of his visit to Rome in 855/6 reflect the importance of pilgrimage and of relations with the Papacy for the Wessex kings, and in addition give a brief but revealing insight into the nature of royal gift-giving before Alfred. The substantial list of gifts is recorded in the *Liber Pontificalis*: "a crown of pure gold, weighing 4 lb; two drinking vessels of purest gold, weighing [blank] lb; a sword bound with purest gold; item, two small images of purest gold; four Saxon bowls of silver gilt; a tunic of white

11 William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. R.A.B. Mynors, completed by R.M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom, 2 vols. (Oxford: 1998), vol. 2, 106.

12 Hartmut Atsma and Jean Vézina, "Le dossier suspect des possessions de Saint-Denis en Angleterre revisité (VIIIe–IXe siècles)," in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter*, MGH Schriften, 5 vols. (Hannover, 1988), vol. 4, 211–236.

13 "de thesauro nostro viginti marcas auri, cum vase argenteo tantumdem pondus habente, et duo pallia purpurei coloris." E.E. Barker, "Sussex Anglo-Saxon Charters, II," *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 87 (1948): 112–163, esp. 132–135.

figured pure-silk with gold enrichment; two large hangings of *fundatum*.¹⁴ On the same occasion, the king also distributed gold and silver among the clergy, nobles and people. The dynasty's close ties with Rome remained strong; when Burgred of Mercia, Æthelwulf's son-in-law, was deposed by the Viking army in 874, he went to Rome, taking with him his queen, Alfred's sister Æthelswith; after Burgred's death, she lived on in Rome, dying in Pavia in 888.

Further hints of the close relationship established between the Wessex dynasty and the Carolingian courts are given by one or two surviving artefacts which can be dated to the first half of the ninth century. A fragment of a luxurious Bible (London, BL, Royal MS I.E.vi) made at Canterbury, probably at St Augustine's, c.820–840, dates to the period when Æthelwulf had conquered Kent, prior to his succession to the Wessex throne in 839; its purple, silver and gold *incipit* page for St Luke's gospel is a battered but still magnificent Anglo-Saxon exercise in the grand Carolingian style.¹⁵ More intimately associated with Alfred's family are the two gold finger-rings associated respectively with Æthelwulf and with Æthelswith of Mercia, his daughter and wife of Burgred of Mercia (852–873/4), mentioned in the previous paragraph (Fig. 2.1, a and b).¹⁶ Both these rings appear to have been made, not as personal rings of the monarch, but as royal gifts, perhaps as rewards or marks of favour, or for the purposes of identifying the bearer as on the king or queen's business. Æthelwulf's ring (Fig. 2.1a) bears the king's title, ETHELVVULF RX, the letters highlighted against a background of dark niello (silver sulphide) inlay, under a highly stylised Christian image of peacocks drinking at the Fountain of Life. This motif, which goes back to the early Christian period, is unique in England, but occurs in two prestigious Carolingian manuscripts: the Godescalc Evangelistary (Paris, BnF, Nouv.acq.lat.1203, fol.3v) commissioned by Charlemagne c.781–783, and the early ninth-century Gospels of Saint-Médard at Soissons (Paris BnF, lat. 8850, fol.6v).¹⁷ In both manuscripts, the conical roof of the fountain is surmounted by an elaborate cross flanked by peacocks, in an image which

14 *The Lives of the Ninth-century Popes from ad 817–891 (Liber Pontificalium)*, ed. Raymond Davis (Liverpool: 1995), 106.34. There is a useful discussion of these gifts in Richard Gem, "Gabatae Saxiscæ: Saxon Bowls in the Churches of Rome During the Eighth and Ninth Centuries" in *Early Medieval Art and Archaeology in the Northern World: A Festschrift in Honour of James Graham-Campbell*, ed. Andrew Reynolds and Leslie Webster (Leiden: 2013), 87–109.

15 Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, no. 32.

16 David M. Wilson, *Anglo-Saxon Ornamental Metalwork 700–1100 in the British Museum: Catalogue of Antiquities of the Later Anglo-Saxon Period* vol.1 (London: 1964), nos. 31 and 1; Webster and Backhouse, *The Making of England*, nos. 244 and 243.

17 Webster, "Ædificia nova," 91–93, Figs. 2.8 and 2.9.



FIGURE 2.1 a: Gold and niello finger-ring of Æthelwulf of Wessex (839–858)

b: Gold and niello finger-ring of Æthelswith of Mercia (d.888)

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Æthelwulf's goldsmith neatly adapted to the small scale of the ring. The queen's ring (Fig. 2.1b) has a lightly incised inscription on the interior of the bezel, +EAEDELSWID REGNA; on its bezel is a cruciform motif with an image of the *Agnus Dei* at its centre. This image is very rare in Anglo-Saxon England before the tenth century, occurring otherwise only in the *Codex Amiatinus* (before 716) and among the destroyed eighth-century sculptures from Hoddum in Dumfriesshire.¹⁸ It is, however, an image which Anglo-Saxon pilgrims would certainly have encountered on their journeys to Rome, most notably in the façade mosaic above the entrance to Old St. Peter's; and it too is an image which resonates in manuscripts associated with Carolingian court schools, appearing again in the Saint-Médard Gospels (fol.1v), and in the *Codex Aureus* of St. Emmeram (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS Clm. 14,000, fol.6r), commissioned by Charles the Bald c.870.¹⁹ The two images, the Fountain of Life and the *Agnus Dei*, are associated with baptism, and with salvation, central tenets of the Christian faith. The appearance of these rare symbols on two

18 Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, no.7, pl. 24; Derek Craig, "The Later Carved Stone Assemblage," in *Excavations at Hoddum: An Early Ecclesiastical Site in South-west Scotland*, ed. C. Lowe (Edinburgh: 2006), 123–133.

19 A late eleventh-century drawing of the façade exists: Eton, Eton College Library, MS 124, fol. 122v; see Christoph Stiegemann and Matthias Wemhoff (eds.), *Kunst und Kultur der Karolingerzeit: Karl der Grosse und Papst Leo III in Paderborn*, 3 vols. (Mainz: 1999), vol. 2, ix.3, 611–613. For manuscripts, see Florentine Mutherich and Joachim E. Gaehde, *Carolingian Painting* (London: 1977), pls. 4 and 38.

rings associated with members of the Wessex royal family cannot be coincidental; attestations of the faith of the royal giver, these signals of royal authority also position the dynasty firmly within a European orbit, with more than a nod to exemplars across the Channel. If two chance survivals such as these rings point to the currency of Carolingian models in Anglo-Saxon royal iconography in the middle years of the ninth century, we might well wonder what other unusual and distinctive images might have been part of the Wessex repertoire—the descriptions of the gifts made by Æthelwulf to Saint-Denis and to St. Peter's, brief as they are, certainly suggest costly workmanship, designed to impress.²⁰

It is more than likely that the young Alfred would have seen rings such as these, which in their use of baptismal and salvation iconography gave a ready example of how ideas could be conveyed through such condensed images, something he was to put to inventive use in his own programme of *renovatio*. In addition to these Carolingian and other continental influences visible at home, Alfred's two journeys to Frankia and Rome also exposed him directly to the art of the Carolingian court, and of the Roman church. He would most probably have visited Charles the Bald's favourite abbey of Saint-Denis, where he would have seen some of the exotic treasures presented to the shrine by the Frankish king; and he certainly would have seen Old St Peter's, where as a boy he was invested with the insignia of the consulate by Pope Leo IV in 853. He is also likely to have accompanied his father in presenting the gifts to the basilica on the second journey of 855/6. Alfred never visited Rome again, but he continued to maintain very close links, regularly sending embassies and alms, and negotiating from Pope Marinus (882–884) exemption from taxes and tolls for the Anglo-Saxon community in Rome, the *Schola Saxonum*, close to St Peter's, where craftsmen and pilgrims were accommodated, and where his son-in-law, Burgred was buried in the church of Sta. Maria.²¹ On that occasion, we are told, Marinus responded with many gifts to the king, including a fragment of the True Cross.

Alfred's knowledge of Carolingian affairs and culture was also kept active through regular contact, instanced by his correspondence with Archbishop Fulco of Reims, and in the numerous Frankish emigrés, scholars and craftsmen that gravitated to his court. A few finds of fine Carolingian metalwork from Wessex, including a gilt-bronze purse-shaped reliquary of continental type, and

20 See also David A. Hinton, *The Alfred Jewel and Other Late Anglo-Saxon Decorated Metalwork* (Oxford: 2008), 94–95, for discussion of a twelfth-century account of Æthelwulf's lavish gifts to Malmesbury which include reference to a crystal "fastigium" on which was inscribed his name in gold lettering.

21 K&L, 82 (Asser, *Life*, cap. 46).

a smart silver-gilt sword-belt mount reflect the status and variety of such contacts. The reliquary (Fig. 2.2) is a composite object, dating to the late eighth or early ninth century, and was ripped apart and thrown into a rubbish pit in Winchester towards the end of the ninth century; on its back, elegant repoussé sheeting with Carolingian acanthus ornament has been cannibalised from an earlier object, while the badly damaged front has an image of Christ in Majesty.²²

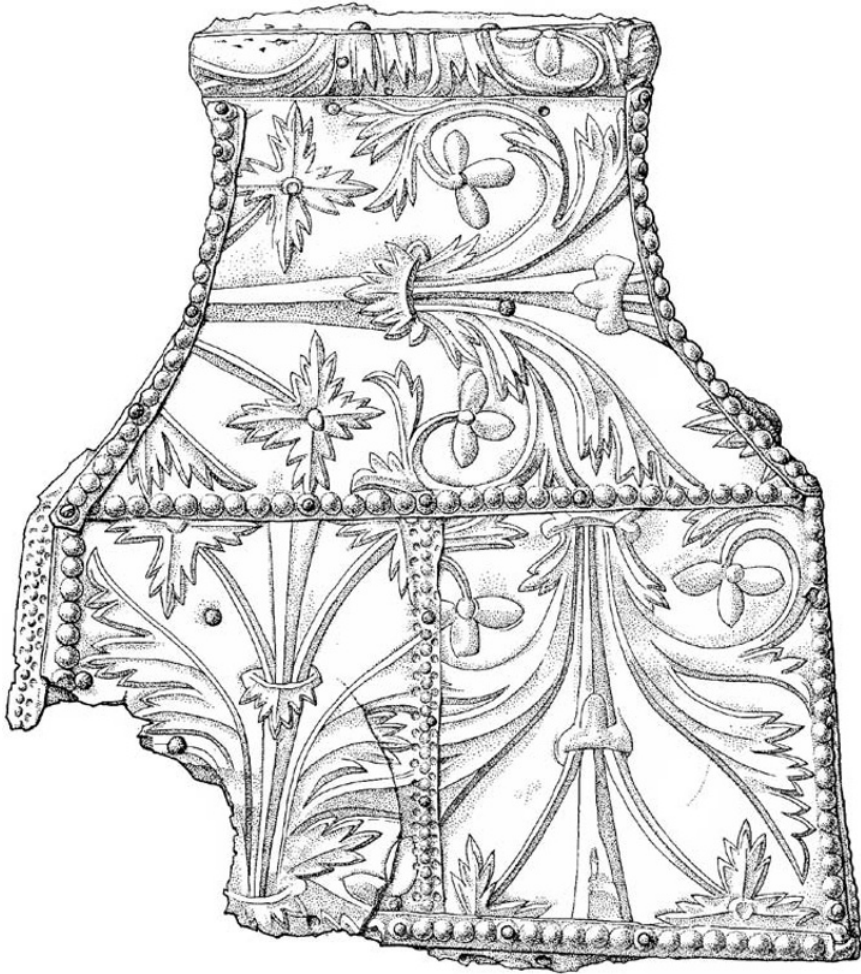


FIGURE 2.2 *Carolingian gilt-bronze reliquary from Winchester, late eighth or early ninth century (after Hinton 1981)*

22 David Hinton, Suzanne Keene, and Ken Qualman, "The Winchester Reliquary," *Medieval Archaeology* 25 (1981): 45–77.

This almost certainly came from one of the monasteries in Alfred's Winchester. The belt-mount was found near the defences of the Alfredian *burh* at Wareham, Dorset, suggesting the presence either of Frankish nobility or someone else with access to courtly Carolingian dress accoutrements.²³ A less likely hypothesis is that high-status items such as these might instead reflect Viking activity in the area, representing loot from continental sources which travelled with the armies as they moved on into England from their latest sorties in Frankia; two Carolingian silver liturgical bowls and the occasional silver Frankish belt mount have also been found in the Danelaw. Whichever the case, as the Viking attacks progressed on both sides of the Channel, it is certainly also evident from Asser's informed accounts of events in Frankia that the king continued to be in close touch with developments on that front, taking a particular interest in how his Frankish opposite numbers confronted their shared experience.

All these factors—personal qualities and cultural influences—played their part in the visualisation of Alfred's ideas about the renewal of learning and spiritual wisdom, expressed in those singular and ingenious artefacts which show the beginnings of a distinct shift in content and style from art works associated with his father's reign. The art of the middle years of the ninth century with which Alfred grew up was dominated by a distinctive and ubiquitous ornament known as the Trewhiddle style, after the hoard of coins and gold and silver items decorated in the style which was found at Trewhiddle in Cornwall.²⁴ The hoard was buried c. 868, but the appearance of the style in both manuscripts and a wide range of secular metalwork which can be dated some twenty or more years earlier—including the two royal rings—confirms that it was well established in Wessex before the middle of the ninth century, and soon extended northwards into Mercia and Northumbria. Its repertoire of sprightly animals, plants, and geometric motifs, arranged in small fields, had developed from a long tradition of zoomorphic decoration in Anglo-Saxon art, and is found in both secular and ecclesiastical contexts. But by Alfred's reign, the increasing disruptions of the Viking wars contributed to a decline in the production and distribution of metalwork and manuscripts decorated in the style; and when Alfred was able to devote more time to his religious and educative programme, and to the design and development of novel creations related to these projects, it must have become evident that a new visual vocabulary was required for the new ideas they embodied.

23 Webster and Backhouse, *The Making of England*, no. 256.

24 David M. Wilson and Christopher Blunt, "The Trewhiddle Hoard," *Archaeologia* 98 (1961): 75–122; Webster and Backhouse, *The Making of England*, no. 246.

Setting aside the question of the Alfredian manuscripts for the moment, the surviving artefacts which can with confidence be ascribed to Alfred's reign fall into two approximate groups—those which are new in content, form, and style; and those which express new ideas in traditional forms. Pre-eminent among the former is of course the Alfred Jewel, which, together with a growing number of functionally similar, but much less elaborate, fellows, is probably to be identified as the handle of an *æstel*, one of which was sent out to each diocese of his kingdom with a copy of the king's translation of Gregory the Great's *Regula Pastoralis*, as the king states in his preface (Fig. 2.3).²⁵ The word *æstel* is usually considered to mean a manuscript pointer; the flat bases of the Jewel and similar fittings, and their short sockets, which are generally around 4 mm in diameter, and designed to hold a short rod of ivory or wood, seem appropriately adapted for such usage. In use, the pointer would have been laid directly on the page and moved smoothly across it from word to word, enabling the text to be followed closely. The inscription on the Alfred Jewel, AELFRED MEC HEHT GEWYRCAN, has generally been thought to refer to the king, despite the absence of the royal title, while its provenance, North Petherton in Somerset, four miles from Athelney, where Alfred had founded a monastery, appointing his Frankish advisor John the Old Saxon as abbot, is also suggestive of an Alfredian link.²⁶ The Jewel is an ostentatious and ambitious piece of work, quite unique in its design. The gold frame, incorporating the openwork inscription, holds a delicately enameled plaque beneath a polished tear-shaped rock crystal, a re-used Roman gem. The enameling is in shades of blue, white, green and brown. The plaque bears an image of a figure with prominent eyes, seen from the waist up and holding a floriated rod in each hand, in the so-called Osiris pose. The back of the Jewel has a delicately incised Tree of Life motif, and the socket is gripped by a snarling beast-head, encrusted with filigree.

The identity of the enameled figure has been the subject of much discussion, but the argument that, like the image on the Fuller brooch (see below), it

25 The literature on the Jewel is enormous: for detailed description and discussion, together with accounts of some of the more recent finds of related objects and a useful bibliography, see Hinton, *The Alfred Jewel*. Since this was published, a further gold fitting of related type has been discovered. The iconography is discussed in detail in Pratt, "Persuasion and Invention," and Webster, "*Ædificia nova*." Of alternative suggested functions for these objects, the terminal of a rod of office is perhaps the most plausible; but the slender diameter of the rods or wands implied by the sockets of these fittings would mean that the weightier versions, such as the Alfred and Warminster Jewels, made construction very top-heavy, and so potentially unstable.

26 K&L, 102–103 (Asser, *Life*, cap. 92–94); Alfred also brought in priests and deacons from "across the sea," and others from Gaul, to fill the monastery.

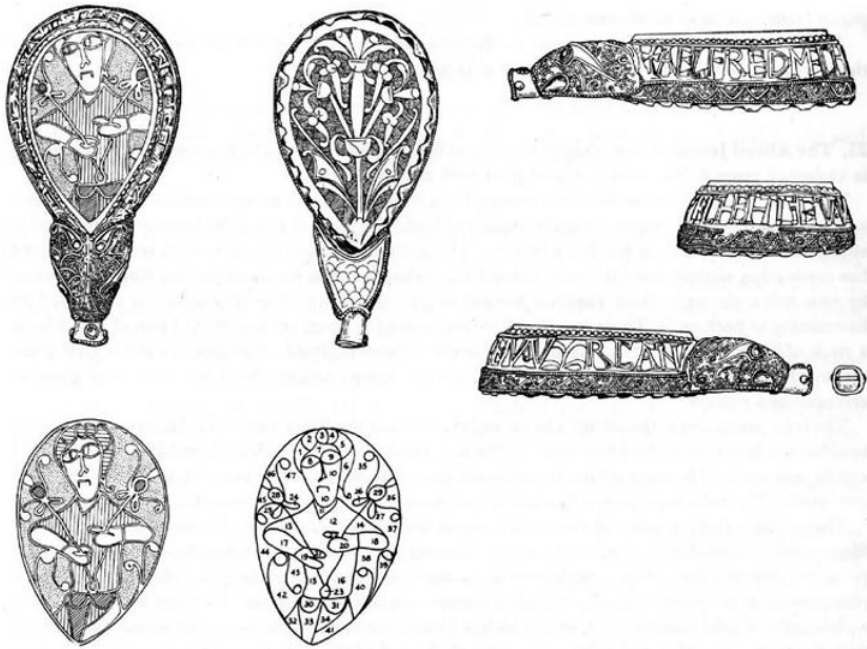


FIGURE 2.3 *The Alfred Jewel, rock-crystal, gold and enamel, late ninth century (after Hinton 1974)*
ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM

represents Sight, with the additional connotation of the Alfredian emphasis on the *modes eagan*, the mind's eyes, through which wisdom is gained by reading and learning, is a powerful one. This of course fits well with the identification of it as an *æstel* handle, and links the Jewel directly to Alfred's preoccupation with wisdom—a dominant theme in his writings, which he actively urged upon his bishops, ministers, and thegns.

Relevant here, as David Pratt has pointed out, is the importance of the symbolism of Solomon's dream at Gihon to Alfred, and to the cult of wisdom at his court.²⁷ By pursuing wisdom, and not desiring riches, Solomon was granted wealth and success by God; thus the thirst for wisdom which underpins so many of Alfred's writings is an essential part of being a ruler, because with wisdom comes power. Alfred himself was compared by Asser to Solomon, something that may lend support to a Frankish connexion here, since Salomonic references, including the exemplum of his dream at Gihon, are also prominent in works associated with Charles the Bald.²⁸ Gifts of books which emphasized Salomonic wisdom were presented to Charles. One of Hincmar's

²⁷ Pratt "Persuasion and Invention," 190–194.

²⁸ K&L, 92 (Asser, *Life*, caps.76).

instructional offerings was his commentary on the Song of Songs, 3: 9–10, the *Ferculum Salomonis*; and Sedulius Scottus' *De rectoribus Christianis*, which was written for Charles in 869, lays emphasis on the dream at Gihon. Some of the great bibles associated with Charles also make prominent reference to Solomon. The *Codex Aureus* of St Emmeram (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS Clm. 14,000), made for the king c. 870, contains an image of the monarch enthroned, with an inscription linking him to his biblical ancestors, David and Solomon (fol. 5v); and the great San Paolo Bible contains a full-page frontispiece to Proverbs, showing the enthroned Solomon in judgment, in the likeness of a Carolingian emperor (Rome, Abbazia di San Paolo, MS f.l.m., fol.188v). Above him are smaller images depicting Solomon's journey to Gihon on David's mule, and his anointing—potent images in a bible presented to Charles shortly after his coronation at Metz in 869.²⁹ Charles later presented this bible to Pope John VII, on the occasion of his imperial coronation in Rome in 875; it has also been suggested that the famous ivory-inlaid throne that the new emperor presented to St Peter's on the same occasion could have signified reference to Solomon's ivory throne (I Kings, 10:18).³⁰

Very relevant in this connexion is another Salomonic object which famously appears among the many magnificent gifts that Charles presented to the shrine of Saint-Denis—the extraordinary object that was traditionally known as the cup or dish of Solomon, but is actually a sixth- or seventh-century Sassanian piece (Fig. 2.4). It is constructed from a gold framework set with garnet and rock crystal intaglios, and green glass, surrounded by a distinctive border of semi-cylindrical garnets in gold cells, and at its centre is a large crystal cameo with the image of an enthroned Sassanian king, most probably Chosroes II (591–628). This image was believed to represent Solomon throughout the medieval period. It was first described in the *Grandes Chroniques de France* in the fourteenth century as an unsurpassed treasure, “so marvellously wrought that in all the kingdoms of the world there is no other so subtle.”³¹

There is no record of when this was given to the shrine of Saint-Denis, or by whom, but it is associated through technical features to two other remarkable objects from the Saint-Denis treasury. The first of these is a luxurious

29 Mutherich and Gaehde, *Carolingian Painting*, 27–28, 108, 119, pls. 37 and 44.

30 J. Wallace-Hadrill, “A Carolingian Renaissance Prince: The Emperor Charles the Bald,” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 64 (1978): 155–184, esp. 177.

31 “Hanap d'or pur et d'émeraudes fines et fins grenez si merueilleusement ouvré que en tous les roiaumes du monde ne fut ainques ovre si soutille,” *Grandes Chroniques de France*, cited by Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, in Daniel Alcouffe, et al., *Le Trésor de Saint-Denis: [exposition] Musée Du Louvre, Paris, 12 Mars–17 Juin, 1991* (Paris: 1991) no.10.

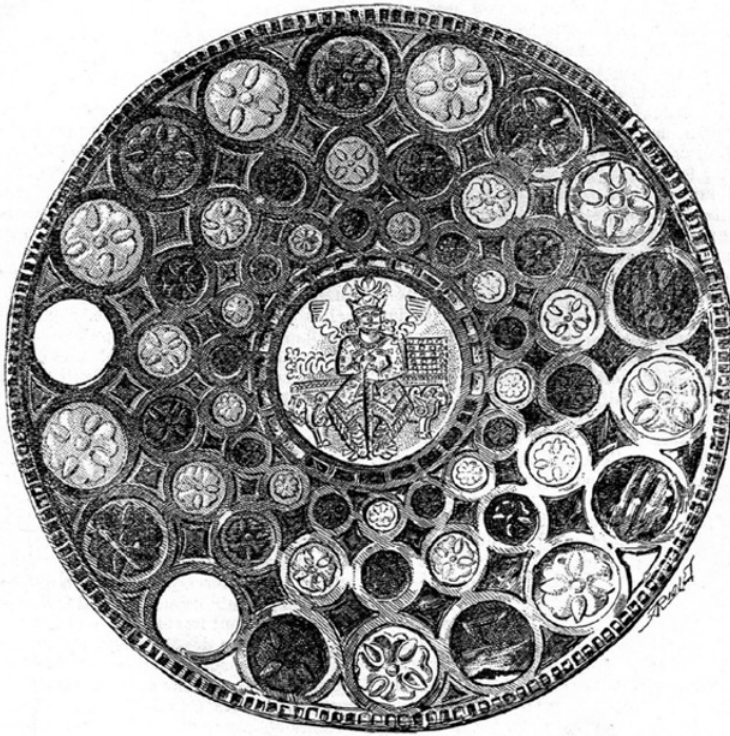


FIGURE 2.4 'The Cup of Solomon': gold and gemstone Sassanian dish, sixth–seventh century (after Babelon 1887, Plate XXI).

first-century serpentine dish adapted to serve as a paten; in the second half of the ninth century, a gem-encrusted gold rim was added to it, the outer border of which is set with semi-cylindrical garnets in a distinctive manner which is clearly modelled on the outer border of the Chosroes dish.³² In turn, the paten rim shares its distinctive use of small heart-shaped garnets with the ninth-century gold and jeweled fittings on another grand object from the treasury, the first-century chalcedony cantharus with Dionysiac scenes, known as the cup of the Ptolemies.³³ These mounts were stolen and melted down in 1804, but detailed drawings, published by Michel Félibien in 1706, record their

32 Alcouffe, *et al.*, *Le Trésor de Saint-Denis*, no. 12c.

33 Alcouffe, *et al.*, in *Le Trésor de Saint-Denis*, no. 11. If the Dionysiac scenes on the cup were identified in the ninth century, it is possible that its Dionysian iconography was assimilated to the cult of Saint Denis, in a way which seems to parallel the equivalent contemporary attribution of writings by the Greek Dionysius to St Denis: see Wallace-Hadrill, "A Carolingian Renaissance Prince," 164.

appearance. The richly jeweled knop and foot of the chalice, like the similar rim of the paten, are of late ninth-century workmanship and were added when these two ancient and exotic objects were adapted for use as a chalice and accompanying paten. The mounts on the cup bore a possibly contemporary inscription (*hoc vas Chryste tibi mente dicavit tertius in francos regmine Karlus*) which links it directly to Charles the Bald, something also suggested by the style of the metalwork.³⁴ The mounts for both the cup and serpentine dish were evidently made under Charles the Bald's royal patronage, perhaps at Saint-Denis itself. Since the Sassanian bowl was evidently a source of technical inspiration for the paten rim, it must already have been present at Saint-Denis when that was adapted for altar usage, suggesting that, however and whenever that extraordinary object arrived in Frankia, it was in the treasury at Saint-Denis in the time of Charles—indeed, is just the kind of extraordinary treasure object that might have been presented by him. Its exotic antique nature links it to the other two ancient pieces associated with the king, embodiments of *renovatio*, and its perceived Salomonic iconography would have been made it even more appropriate as a gift from Charles the Bald.

If, as argued above, the figure on the Alfred Jewel reflects the importance of wisdom in Alfred's writings, it may also perhaps embody a visual Salomonic reference, of the kind we see on the dish, with its central rock-crystal image of a Sassanian king whom Alfred's contemporaries took to be Solomon. We have seen that this object was certainly known, and its craftsmanship emulated, at the court of Charles the Bald, for whom it must have carried a particular resonance, in view of the prominence of Salomonic reference in manuscripts associated with the king/emperor and his circle. On the dish, the crowned king sits on his lion throne, as if in judgement; his hands are together on the hilt of his sheathed sword, and from his shoulders two textile bands flutter diagonally upwards. Could this supposed image of Solomon have indirectly inspired the image on the Alfred Jewel? The dish was a cult object, famous throughout the Middle Ages; no-one who had seen it could possibly forget it. We might reasonably suppose that descriptions of this potent image of wise and godly kingship could have reached Alfred's ears, rather than entertain the more risky suggestion that he saw it with his own eyes as a child when visiting the court of Charles the Bald. An oral account of the 'Solomon' image from one of Alfred's Frankish mentors, or from some other Frankish visitor to his court, would have included the essentials, such as the use of rock-crystal, and the presence of the

34 Alcouffe, *et al.*, *Le Trésor de Saint-Denis*, no. 11, 83–87, esp. 86; in the context of St. Denis, the inscription referring to Charles the Third denotes Charles the Bald, rather than Charles the Simple.

'Solomon' image, but it would not necessarily have provided an accurate description; it is easy to see, for example, how the bands fluttering diagonally upwards above the shoulders could have been translated into the Insular convention of Christ and other scriptural figures holding two diagonal flowering staffs.³⁵ Of course, the two images are rather different in appearance, but this is a matter of substance, not form, ideas, not imitations; here the prominent use of crystal in both the jewel and the dish, and the pose of authority, assimilated to Anglo-Saxon traditions, are more important than exactitude.

Whether or not the Alfred Jewel is intended at one level to recall Solomon as the embodiment of wisdom, as well as to indicate Sight as the means of accessing that wisdom, must remain open to debate. Nevertheless, a Frankish influence which that image may reflect is certainly visible elsewhere in the Jewel. The elaborate cloisonné enameling seen on the Jewel is very much a Frankish technique at this period, ranging from the production of simple bronze disc brooches with cruciform designs and images of saints (*heiligenfibeln*) to more ambitious gold brooches with cloisonné enamel figures and other technically complex decoration, and enameled insets on grand ecclesiastical objects, such as the c. 950 Milan altarpiece.³⁶ In style and technique the enamel on the Alfred Jewel has no predecessor or contemporary parallel in Anglo-Saxon metalwork, apart from one of the other putative *æstels*, the Minster Lovell Jewel, which has a delicate double cross design executed in white, green, and light and dark blue cloisonné enamel. The use in both jewels of blue, white, and green enamels in gold cloisonné work, and the technical proficiency of the enameling, certainly point to Frankish influence.

Equally unusual, the use of rock-crystal *spolia* in the Alfred Jewel, and in another of the more elaborate *æstels*, the so-called Warminster Jewel (Fig. 2.5), might also reflect the Carolingian taste for large gemstones, especially their spiritual symbolism, and for the reuse of late Antique *spolia*. The profusion of gemstones in the Sassanian dish must have been one of the reasons why that object was so greatly prized. But the most ostentatious example of this fascination with gems is the object first described at Saint-Denis at the beginning of the tenth century as the *escrain Kalles*—that is, the shrine of Charles the Bald. This was one of the major casualties of the wholesale destruction of church treasures in 1793, but fortunately, its crest was spared, and a detailed

35 As, for example, in the Lichfield Gospels p. 221, and the Book of Kells f. 202v; Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, nos. 21 and 52.

36 Egon Wamers, *Die frühmittelalterliche Lesefunde aus der Löhrrstrasse (Baustelle Hilton II) in Mainz*, *Mainzer Archäologische Schriften Band 1* (Mainz: 1994), 50–85; Günther Haseloff, *Email im frühen Mittelalter: Frühchristliche Kunst von der Spätantike bis zu den Karolingern*, *Marburger Studien, Vor- und Frühgeschichte Sonderband 1* (Marburg: 1990).



FIGURE 2.5 *The Warminster Jewel, gold, rock-crystal and blue glass, late ninth century*
 (Scale approximately 2:1)
 PHOTO: BRITISH MUSEUM

watercolour of the entire creation was made by Etienne-Eloi Labarre, prior to its destruction.³⁷ The crest gives some idea of the effect of the whole; it consists of a late Antique aquamarine intaglio in a gold setting, surrounded by sapphires similarly framed to allow the light to reveal their colour and quality. The use on the *escrain* of elegant *à jour* settings maximise the translucency of its many gemstones in way similar to that in which the openwork construction of the frames which hold the Alfred Jewel and Warminster crystals is used to

37 Alcouffe, *et al.*, *Le Trésor de Saint-Denis*, nos. 13a,b.

display the purity and translucent nature of the rock-crystal. The use of crystal mounted in gold is extremely rare in Anglo-Saxon contexts; but polished and engraved rock-crystals were highly prized by the Carolingians, among them, the Lothair Crystal, and the large crucifixion intaglio, another of Charles's gifts to Saint-Denis.³⁸ Crystal was prized from ancient times for its translucence and clarity, and large beads, sometimes faceted, were used as amulets in late fifth- and sixth-century Frankish and Anglo-Saxon contexts indeed, one of these has been adapted to form the central element of the Warminster *æstel*.³⁹ Rock crystal's translucence could perhaps be linked to the Alfredian preoccupation with seeing clearly as a means to understanding, which would be entirely appropriate to a pointer designed to be used with an exemplary text such as the *Regula Pastoralis*.⁴⁰

The other seemingly related fittings are by a considerable margin less elaborate and costly than the Alfred Jewel, though they are all united by a variety of traits, including, as we have seen, rock crystal (the Warminster Jewel) and enameling (the Minster Lovell Jewel); other shared features are blue glass cabochon settings (the Warminster, Bowleaze Cove and Aughton fittings) fine filigree and granulation (Minster Lovell Jewel), animal-head decoration (Borg, Lofoten, and Aughton, Yorkshire, fittings).⁴¹ It seems likely in terms of these links and their technical similarity that all are of much the same date, but it is less probable that all of these fittings can have belonged to the expensive pointers directly commissioned by Alfred to accompany copies of the *Pastoral Care* distributed across the dioceses of Wessex. These *æstels* were stated in Alfred's preface to be worth 50 mancuses, equivalent to seven and a half ounces in gold—a significant sum. Its costly materials and its superb workmanship may place the Alfred Jewel in that league, but most of the others are of significantly lower value. Some of these less ambitious examples may thus perhaps be versions inspired by Alfredian originals. Other, more elaborate pieces—the Minster Lovell Jewel with its fine filigree and enameled cross within a cross; and the Warminster Jewel with its re-used crystal, and its blue glass cabochon set at the centre rather like the pupil of a crystal eye—are themselves wholly

38 Geneva Kornbluth, *Engraved Gems of the Carolingian Empire* (Pennsylvania: 1995), nos. 1 (pages 31–48) and 18 (100–106) and figs 18–21 through 18–12.

39 E.g., *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum Libri XX*, ed. W. Lindsay (Oxford: 1911), book 16, chap. 13; Audrey Meaney, *Anglo-Saxon Amulets and Curing-Stones*, B.A.R., British Series 96 (Oxford: 1981), 90–96.

40 See further on the significance of rock crystal in Webster, “*Ædificia nova*,” 85–86; and Hinton, *The Alfred Jewel*, 22–24.

41 Hinton, *The Alfred Jewel*, 32, 36.

new kinds of artefact, imaginative creations which, like the Alfred Jewel, can aptly be said to reflect that ingenuity which Asser ascribes to Alfred.

The Fuller brooch represents another aspect of artistic invention in Alfred's circle (Fig. 2.6); in this case, the adaptation of a traditional form to the expression of new ideas. A classic Anglo-Saxon type of large silver disc brooch set with small bosses which was current from the early ninth century to the middle of the eleventh, the Fuller brooch (named after a former owner) bears a severely elegant design of figures and other motifs inlaid with starkly contrasting black niello.⁴² Its iconography links it to the Alfred Jewel through its central image of Sight, which is portrayed as a half-length figure with prominent eyes,



FIGURE 2.6 *The Fuller brooch, silver and niello, late ninth century*

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42 Rupert Bruce-Mitford, "Late Saxon Disc Brooches" in D.B. Harden (ed.), *Dark Age Britain: Studies Presented to E.T. Leeds* (London: 1956), 173–190.

in ecclesiastical dress and holding lush sheaves of foliage. Around this, the other four Senses are portrayed as full-length figures with gestures or accessories appropriate to their roles. An outer zone has images of humans, birds, beasts and floral motifs, signifying, as Pratt convincingly argues, the four aspects of mortal, transient, creation.⁴³ These are contrasted with the figure of Sight, which represents the everlasting spiritual faculty of man's eternal soul, the mind's eyes, *modes eagan*, the conduit through which wisdom is perceived, repeatedly emphasized in Alfred's writings. In this subtly expressed iconography, the four outer senses through which the material world is apprehended support the supreme spiritual faculty. The brooch, superb in its craftsmanship and subtle in its intellectual content, is a powerful embodiment of Alfred's ideas about the importance of wisdom and its acquisition—by himself, by his nobility, by his clergy and by the next generation who would govern after him. Its seriousness of import is so close to Alfred's thinking that it is hardly possible to see it as other than commissioned by the king himself—if not for his own personal use, then for one of those among his family, entourage, or churchmen who were also dedicated to the pursuit of wisdom.

There are some hints that this might not have been the sole advertisement of Alfred's ideas about learning and spirituality to have featured in personal equipment. A silver strap-end from Cranbourne in Wiltshire (Fig. 2.7), dating in type and on stylistic grounds to the later ninth century, is decorated with a figure of a youth clambering upwards through a vine; he holds a knife in his hand and his mouth gapes open as if to bite the stylized bunch of grapes that dangles before him. Could this represent the sense of Taste, and have originally have been accompanied by three other strap-ends (suites of four are not unheard of) depicting Hearing, Touch and Smell, with the image of Sight reserved for the prime position on an accompanying belt buckle?⁴⁴ The style and posture of the figure is certainly close to that of the figures on the Fuller brooch, and could have emanated from the same workshop.

However, an alternative possibility, equally suggestive, presents itself. The boy entangled in the vine and the grape bunch he is about to harvest suggests the *ego sum vitis vera* of John 15:1–10, where Jesus commands the faithful to “dwell in me, as I in you”; the harvested grape becomes the eucharistic wine, Christ's own blood from which whoever drinks dwells continually in Christ (John 6:56). This is a new and unique version of the motif of the inhabited vinescroll where birds and other creatures feed on the grape bunches, which is

43 Pratt, “Persuasion and Invention,” 209–220, especially 214–216.

44 For example, the set from Lilla Howe, N. Yorkshire; Webster and Backhouse, *The Making of England*, no. 249.



FIGURE 2.7 *Silver strap-end from Cranbourne, Dorset, late ninth century (Scale 2:1)*
DRAWING: NICHOLAS GRIFFITHS

widespread in sculpture of the eighth and early ninth centuries. It has however, a close sculptural counterpart in a fragment of what may have been a cross-shaft from Codford St Peter, Wiltshire (Fig. 2.8, a and b). The date of this sculpture has been much debated. Dominic Tweddle has assigned it a date in the late eighth century while others, the author included, prefer a date in the later ninth century.⁴⁵ It is a highly unusual piece, which no doubt accounts for the wide date range given to it. However, the stylistic similarities of the main

45 Summarised in his entry in Webster and Backhouse, *The Making of England*, no. 208.



FIGURE 2.8 *Cross-shaft, Codford St Peter, Wiltshire, late ninth century (a) front (b) side view*
PHOTO: BRITISH MUSEUM

image, and of some of the foliage motifs on the sculpture, to objects datable to the late ninth century and possibly associated with Alfred's circle, offer good reasons for a more likely dating to Alfred's reign. On the surviving main face of the shaft is a dancing youth holding what seems to be a flask in one hand and a fruiting vine branch which he has harvested raised triumphantly in the other,

the grape bunch dangling over his head. The presence of the flask symbolises the transformation of the grape into wine, and hence the eucharist. The only potential iconographical parallel in sculpture is a fragment with a figure apparently harvesting fruit from Ingleby, Derbyshire; but this is of uncertain date and is both stylistically and in detail very different.⁴⁶ The dancing posture of the Codford St. Peter figure recalls that of the subsidiary senses on the Fuller brooch, and the figure on the strap-end; his high-backed shoes with pointed tongues also resemble those on the figures of Taste, Smell and Hearing on the Fuller brooch. The foliage on the shaft provides compelling parallels; the surviving part of the left side of the shaft (which has been in part cut away) has distinctive bunches of lobed acanthus-type leaves flopping out symmetrically from a cusped element with a ribbed mouth, very similar to the lobed foliage shoots which cascade out of the ribbed cornucopia held by the figure of Sight on the Fuller Brooch. Similar bunches of lobed and drooping fronds appear on the decoration of the Abingdon sword (see below), another object of late ninth century date, and it may be of relevance here that the small human figure on the sword's upper guard holds a foliage branch in one hand, and an unidentified object in the other, rather like the Codford St Peter figure; his shoes are also of the same type shown on the cross and the Brooch. The top of the fruiting branch held by the Codford harvester has distinctive round buds, and a stem composed of staged cusped elements which have some resemblance to Tree of Life elements in one of the pairs of brooches from the Pentney Hoard, which date to the first third of the ninth century; but it also recalls the staged and cusped stems of the Tree of Life on the back of the Alfred Jewel.⁴⁷ Cumulatively, these interrelationships provide strong support for the late ninth century date suggested here for the cross-shaft.

Given the extreme rarity of their iconography, and the stylistic similarity of the harvesting figures, the Wessex provenance of both the Cranbourne strap-end and the Codford St Peter shaft fragment suggests a possible connexion between the two, whether in terms of a shared tradition, or links to a patron with an interest in this unusual presentation of the eucharistic theme. And as we have noted, both, through the firmly realized figural treatment of their dancing or stepping figures, also recall the subsidiary senses on the Fuller brooch, reinforcing the possibility of a link with Alfred's circle.

Another secular object from Wessex, which—like the brooch and the strap-end—seems to resonate with Alfred's concern that his nobility should be

46 Jane Hawkes, "Gathering Fruit at Ingleby: An Early Medieval Sculptural Fragment from Ingleby, Derbyshire," *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 163 (2010): 1–15.

47 See Webster and Backhouse, *The Making of England*, no. 187, a and b.

spiritually educated in order to exercise power and governance wisely is a sword with niello-inlaid silver decoration on its hilt, found at Abingdon, Berkshire (Fig. 2.9).⁴⁸ The sword belongs to a late ninth-century type, with fleshy plant ornament that relates it to the Fuller brooch, and to the leaf forms of the Alfred Jewel back-plate; but the decorative scheme is more subtle and elaborate, compared with other contemporary swords. This is indeed a very suitable weapon for a Christian warrior in Alfred's mode; concealed amid the elaborate ornament on the upper guard are what are generally accepted as the symbols of the four evangelists—on one side, the figures of a man and an eagle, and on the other those of a bull, seen from above, and a highly stylized lion. It is of course possible that these have a simple apotropaic function here, the evangelist symbols bringing protection to the bearer through the power of the four Gospels. But the use of Christian motifs and inscriptions on swords and armour which can be seen on some seventh- and eighth-century weaponry does not seem to occur on the ninth-century equivalents; though quite a



FIGURE 2.9 *Sword hilt (detail) inlaid with silver and niello, from Abingdon, Berkshire, late ninth century*

PHOTO: BRITISH MUSEUM

48 David Hinton, *A Catalogue of the Anglo-Saxon Ornamental Metalwork 700–1100 in the Department of Antiquities, Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford: 1974), no. 1; Janet Backhouse, Derek Turner, and Leslie Webster, (eds.), *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art 966–1066* (London: 1984), no. 14.

number of swords with decorated silver hilt fittings survive from the second half of the ninth century, the Abingdon sword is the only one which carries Christian symbols.⁴⁹

The Codford St Peter sculptural fragment apart, these artefacts, whether new creations like the *æstels*, or ones which adapt new motifs to traditional forms, like the brooch and strap-end, are all small scale. Of the king's new foundations at Athelney, Shaftesbury and Winchester, only a fragment of a wall-painting, painted in red ochre, yellow, white and black, survives to hint at large-scale decoration in the rich interior furnishings of his churches and palaces (Fig. 2.10).⁵⁰ There is nothing to compare, for example, with the grandeur of Charlemagne's royal chapel at Aachen, or with the rich vestiges of internal decoration recovered from his excavated palace at Paderborn.⁵¹ Nevertheless, the wall painting fragment, which shows part of a group of figures, possibly martyrs or confessors, is a sophisticated piece; it offers the briefest of glimpses of how Alfred's new buildings might have been decorated. It also offers further testimony to the presence of the Frankish craftsmen at Alfred's court, since it clearly owes much to Carolingian manuscript- and wall-painting—the latter strongly influenced by Roman wall-painting and in some cases, Rome-trained craftsmen.⁵² The fragment was found during excavations at Winchester, where it was re-used in the construction of the New Minster; it is therefore dated by its excavation context to before 903, placing it firmly in Alfred's orbit.

The confident Carolingian style of the wall-painting fragment makes the contrast all the more striking when one turns to the more traditional and conservative decoration of manuscripts from Alfred's reign. The few surviving illuminated manuscripts that can be dated to the late ninth century have

49 See, for example, Leslie Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art: A New History* (London: 2012), 125–126.

50 Backhouse, Turner, and Webster, *The Golden Age*, no. 25.

51 “Die Pfalz Paderborn” in *Kunst und Kultur der Karolingerzeit*, ed. Stiegemann and Wemhoff, 124–167. The Alfredian phase of the high-status Anglo-Saxon site at Cheddar, Somerset, has been described as a palace, but it is uncertain whether it held royal status in Alfred's day (K&L, note 25, 317–318). The large wooden hall is an imposing structure, but there is no evidence for exceptional decoration and furnishings of the kind which adorned continental stone palaces; see Philip A. Rahtz, *The Saxon and Medieval Palaces at Cheddar, Somerset*, British Archaeological Reports, British Series 65 (Oxford 1979).

52 See Jean-Pierre Caillet, “La classification des manuscrits carolingiens: Le problème des écoles,” *Cahiers Archéologiques, fin de l'Antiquité et Moyen Âge* 53 (2011): 33–48. The Carolingian wall-paintings at Mustair and Malles were executed by artists trained in Roman tradition.



FIGURE 2.10 Wall-painting fragment from the site of the New Minster, Winchester, before 903
PHOTO: WINCHESTER MUSEUM

modest decoration consisting of initials in a style that looks back to the ornamented script of manuscripts associated with the Mercian later eighth- and early ninth-century Tiberius group, such as the Barberini Gospels (Rome, Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana MS Barberini lat. 570), the Book of Cerne (Cambridge, University Library, MS LL.1.10), and the Tiberius Bede (London, BL, Cotton Tiberius MS C.ii).⁵³ It was a decorated initial in a book of Old English poetry that allegedly first attracted the boy Alfred to learn to read and it was evidently manuscripts decorated in that older style that Alfred's scribes used as exemplars, rather than any richly decorated continental manuscript.⁵⁴ Gameson has indeed pointed out that a number of late ninth- and early tenth-century decorated manuscripts are copies of texts associated with Alfred, indicating dissemination of the style from Alfred's circle.⁵⁵ Typical decoration of this kind appears in the copy of Alfred's translation of the *Pastoral Care* which was sent to Worcester (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Hatton 20) and a contemporary copy of Aldhelm's *de Virginitate* written in Mercia (London, BL, Royal MS 5.F.iii; Figs. 2.11 and 2.12).⁵⁶ Both have simple ornamental initials

53 Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, nos. 36, 66 and 33; for a discussion of the origins of the decoration of late-ninth-century manuscripts, see Richard Gameson, "The Decoration of the Tanner Bede," *Anglo-Saxon England* 21 (1992): 115–159, especially 117–123.

54 K&L, 75 (Asser, *Life*, cap. 23).

55 Gameson, "The Tanner Bede," 120–121.

56 Elżbieta Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts 900–1066: A Survey of Manuscripts illuminated in the British Isles*, vol. 2, nos. 1 and 2 (London, 1976); see also Gameson, "The Tanner Bede," 115–159, especially 120–122.



FIGURE 2.11

Decorated initial from a copy of Alfred's translation of the Pastoral Care (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Hatton 20, fol. 93v)

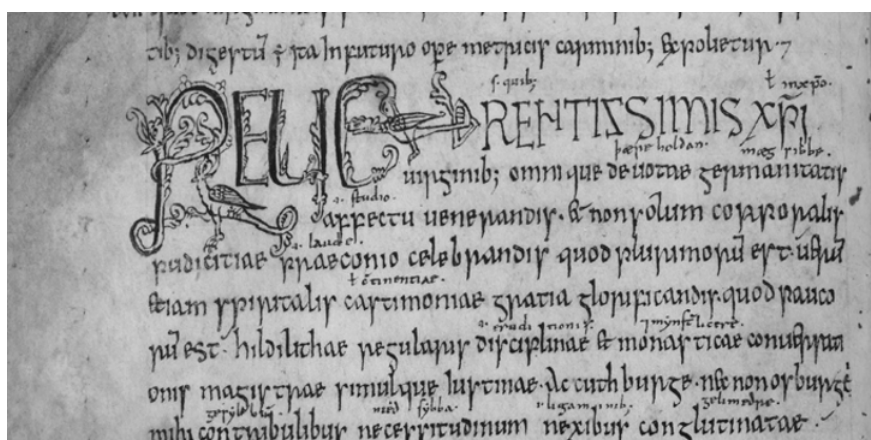


FIGURE 2.12 Decorated initials from a copy of Aldhelm's *de Virginitate* (London, British Library Royal MS 5.F.iii, fol. 2v)

composed of small quirky animals (Wormald's Type 1), which directly recall the snapping beasts which enliven initials in, e.g., the late eighth-century Barberini Gospels (fols. 80, 125), or the early ninth-century Tiberius Bede (fol. 5b).⁵⁷ The palette is limited—for example, black ink drawing, infilled with

57 Francis Wormald, "Decorated Initials in English Manuscripts from AD 900 to 1100," *Archaeologia* 91 (1945): 107–135. Type 1 initials are composed from entire animals. For the

green, yellow and red in the *Pastoral Care*, and brown outline in the Aldhelm. The Aldhelm has rather more extended ornament, with additional flurries of foliage which reflect the lobed acanthus-like fronds which appear in metal-work, sculpture and bone carving (e.g., fol. 2v, and see above). An antler handle fitting from the City of London, the only surviving example of this style transferred to a three-dimensional object, confirms the wider currency of the style beyond the scriptorium (Fig. 2.13).⁵⁸

These manuscripts are of course edificatory in intent, intended for study and teaching; their modest decoration reflects the obvious fact that they have a completely different function from the grand display manuscripts, the Gospel books, Bibles and Psalters, of the eighth and early ninth centuries. But even less prestigious Anglo-Saxon works from that earlier period, intended for private contemplation or study, are often decorated with more ambitious initials than those of the manuscripts associated with Alfred and with his reign.⁵⁹ The



FIGURE 2.13 *Antler handle from the City of London, early tenth century*
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manuscripts, see Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, nos. 36 and 33; Webster and Backhouse, *The Making of England*, nos. 160, 170.

58 Backhouse, Turner, and Webster, *The Golden Age*, no. 19.

59 For example, London, BL MS Royal 2.A.xx, fol. 17, a Mercian prayerbook; Webster and Backhouse, *The Making of England*, no. 163; and the Tiberius Bede, which gave its name to the Tiberius group (London, BL, Cotton Tiberius MS C.ii, fol.5v).

contrast with manuscripts produced by Alfred's Carolingian neighbours is even more striking; the magnificent bibles, psalters and other manuscripts that were made for Charlemagne (768–814), Louis the Pious (814–840), Lothair I (843–855) and Charles the Bald, were made to exalt the dynasty as well as to honour the divinity. Images of the royal patrons are prominent. Charles the Bald in particular, is portrayed and praised in a number of manuscripts associated with him. For example, in the first Bible of Charles the Bald, made at Tours in c. 845/6 for presentation to the king, the image of King David accompanying the Psalms bears a remarkable facial likeness to the figure of the enthroned Charles on the presentation page; and in one of the three accompanying dedicatory poems, Charles the Bald is placed among God's first chosen people, indicated by David, Solomon and Joseph, to symbolise that God's mission is entrusted to a second chosen race, the Franks (Paris, BN, MS lat.1, fols.215v, 423 and 2v). There is a grandeur and sense of destiny inherent in this and many other Carolingian court manuscripts. These luxurious creations elevated and distanced the king in all his power and glory, while the much more modest manuscripts which Alfred commissioned were intended for circulation, and to bring his court and clergy nearer to his personal thinking. The contemporary celebration of Alfred as a ruler, reflected in fulsome terms in Asser's *Life*, produced no surviving royal manuscript portraits; it is not until the reign of his grandson, Æthelstan, that an Anglo-Saxon king is depicted in a manuscript. The very different image of kingship, and of royal patronage, that those Carolingian manuscripts project is very far from the godly austerity that Asser presents to us. Nevertheless, it is distinctly odd that no illuminated gospel book or bible, or indeed a psalter (given Alfred's own translations from the Psalms) survives from Alfred's reign, and even odder that among all the descriptions of Alfreds' donations and inventions, Asser makes no attempt to describe Alfred as a patron of grand bibles or other lavishly ornamented manuscripts, in the manner of earlier Anglo-Saxon bishops and abbots, such as Wilfrid, Ceolfrith, and Eadfrith.

Yet modest as the surviving Alfredian manuscripts are, it may be argued that it is in Alfred's programme of renewal, and the educational initiatives that he fostered, that the foundations were laid for the monastic reforms of the mid-tenth century, and for the beginnings of the great artistic achievements associated with the reformed monasteries, which are fully the equal in ostentation and grandeur of their Carolingian counterparts.⁶⁰

60 David N. Dumville, "King Alfred and the Tenth-century Reform of the English Church," *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar: Six Essays on Political, Cultural, and Ecclesiastical Revival* (Woodbridge: 1992), 185–205.

At one level, the simply decorated initials of manuscripts from Alfred's reign, such as Bodleian Hatton 20, are the evident precursors of the more ambitious and elaborate initials of manuscripts associated with the reigns of his successors Edward the Elder and Æthelstan.⁶¹ But the legacy of an Alfredian artistic tradition is more than that. Alfred's religious *renovatio*, reinforced by the influence of the Frankish scholars he introduced to his court, also sustained those links with Frankia which were to be so influential for the tenth-century monastic reform movement, and for its art, which drew significantly on ninth-century Carolingian models. These Carolingian influences are clearly seen in the connecting thread of Alfredian influence, albeit a fine one, which is traceable through a few fine artefacts datable to the reigns of Alfred's successors.

Gameson has drawn attention to the survival and continuation of cultural trends initiated under Alfred in the reign of his son, Edward the Elder (899–924).⁶² Though he is remembered rather for his military successes, Edward had been given a liberal education, and frequently made use of books in English; he was active in preserving the continuity of religious life, and in endowing monastic foundations.⁶³ Decorated manuscripts attributed to the first few decades of the tenth century, such as the Durham Ritual (Durham, Cathedral Library MS A.IV. 19) and the Tanner Bede (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 10), with their robust Type 1 initials composed from colourful biting birds and dragons (and occasional human figures), show an evident debt to Alfredian manuscript ornament.⁶⁴ The continuity and quality of cultural activity implied by this is also signalled by a few significant objects which date to the period of Edward's reign. Of these, the most famous and splendid are the embroidered stole and maniple (Fig. 2.14) commissioned by Edward the Elder's wife, Ælflæd (d.916), for Bishop Frithestan of Winchester (909–931). Made between 909 and 916, and probably no more than ten years after Alfred's death, they show a masterly command of Carolingian figure style, and of the elaborate acanthus leaf ornament which is characteristic of Carolingian art. In this, they already prefigure the "Winchester" style of the mid-tenth century.⁶⁵ They also point to the existence of skilled artists at Edward's court. Such sophisticated workmanship

61 Wormald, "Decorated Initials," 107–135; for manuscripts associated with the period of Edward the Elder and Æthelstan, see Gameson "The Tanner Bede," 150–159.

62 Gameson, "The Tanner Bede," 154–156.

63 K&L, 90–91 (Asser, *Life*, cap.75).

64 Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, nos. 4 and 9.

65 Backhouse, Turner, and Webster, *The Golden Age*, pl. 3; Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 19 and fig. 130.

did not emerge without trace. No doubt embroidered textiles such as these, as well as the wall-paintings in similar style, had existed in Alfred's Winchester; and perhaps the influence of lost sculpture from this period is also to be seen in a number of pieces of high-quality sculpture dating to the early tenth century. A grave cover from St Oswald's Priory, Gloucester, which was founded by Edward's sister, Æthelflæd of Mercia c. 899, has a fine Tree of Life which gives sculptural form to the similar motif seen on the back of the Alfred Jewel.⁶⁶ Only a little later, the cross shafts from Colyton in Devon, and East Stour in Dorset, which may date to the 920s or 930s, exhibit elaborate Carolingian acanthus-leaf decoration (Fig. 2.15).⁶⁷ Both have innovative versions of this which in different ways, adapt it to the native tradition of the sculptured vinescroll. The Colyton shaft also has acanthus sprays which have a close affinity with equivalents seen in the Frithestan textiles. Further traces of an Alfredian legacy may also be seen in the much debated fragments of the sculptured column from Reculver, Kent, which have been convincingly argued by Tweddle to date to the late ninth or early tenth century; these, too, prefigure the "Winchester" style in both figure style and again, in acanthus-like foliage.⁶⁸

These trends continued into the reign of Æthelstan (924–939). The embroidered stole and maniple of Bishop Frithestan, made between 909–916, were presented by him, with many other gifts, to the shrine of St Cuthbert at Chester-le Street, County Durham, in 934, showing that, in revering a saint honoured by his father and grandfather, he also prized the artistic tradition of the Wessex court in their reigns.⁶⁹ The marked Carolingian style of the manuscripts associated with Æthelstan in the second quarter of the tenth century also reflects a tradition going back to the time of Alfred. The dedication image in the copy of Bede's *Lives of St. Cuthbert* (CCCC MS 183), presented by Æthelstan to the saint's shrine in 934, depicts the king reverently offering the volume to the saint.⁷⁰ In contrast to the rather stolid figure-painting, the scene is framed by a masterly display of rioting foliage, including vine-scrolls with acanthine leaves and grape clusters, and Tree-of-Life motifs with lush shoots and drooping leaf tendrils; amid the profuse foliage, four birds and a lion variously perch

66 See entry by Jeffrey West in Backhouse, Turner, and Webster, *The Golden Age*, no. 14.

67 Rosemary Cramp, *South-West England*, Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture 7 (Oxford: 2006), 80–82, ill. 3–9; and 101–102, ill. 57–64; and see also 9 and 42.

68 Backhouse, Turner, and Webster, *The Golden Age*, no. 22.

69 Symeon of Durham, *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, ed. and trans. Ted Johnson South (Cambridge: 2002), 19a.

70 E.g., Bede's *Lives of St Cuthbert* (CCCC MS 183); Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, no. 6; and Backhouse, Turner, and Webster, *The Golden Age*, no. 6.



FIGURE 2.14 *Embroidered stole and maniple (detail) from St Cuthbert's shrine, commissioned by Edward the Elder's wife, Ælfflæd (d.916), for Bishop Frithestan of Winchester (909–931)*

PHOTO: DURHAM CATHEDRAL TREASURY



FIGURE 2.15 *Cross-shaft, Colyton, Devon, first quarter of tenth century*
PHOTO: CORPUS OF ANGLO-SAXON STONE SCULPTURE

on or bite at the plants. This distinctive Carolingian-style plant ornament is close in style to the Colyton cross-shaft; but an even closer parallel occurs in the leaf forms and tendrilled calices of the delicate foliage scrolls flanking an image of Christ in Majesty with the four evangelist symbols, on an unprovenanced ivory panel from a bookcover, now in the Pierpont Morgan Library.⁷¹ The striking similarity of the beardless and youthful Christ figure on this panel to that of the risen Christ in another manuscript associated with Æthelstan, a small psalter known as the Æthelstan Psalter (London, BL, MS Cotton Galba A. XVIII, fol. 21r.), suggests that the ivory panel, with its Anglo-Saxon version of acanthus scroll-work, may have been produced in a workshop associated with Æthelstan's court.⁷² The Æthelstan Psalter itself is an early ninth-century Carolingian book, made near Liège, which had reached England by the second quarter of the 10th century, when new Anglo-Saxon miniatures were added. It is said to have been presented by Æthelstan to the Old Minster, Winchester, where it remained throughout the medieval period.⁷³ The figural style of the Anglo-Saxon paintings in the Psalter is close to that of Corpus MS 183, and also to the Alfredian wall-painting fragment from Winchester, discussed above. The wall-painting was originally part of a larger group of figures, similar in character to the choruses of holy martyrs, confessors and virgins on fol. 21r, and prophets and saints on fol. 2v, of the Psalter. It is indeed conceivable that the Carolingian manuscript could have reached England during Alfred's reign, though since we know that Æthelstan owned some books of continental origin, and had close connexions with the Frankish rulers, it is perhaps more likely to have arrived in England through that route.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the network of links between artefacts of Æthelstan's and Edward's reigns, and what we can glimpse of artistic traditions in Alfred's Wessex, suggest that Alfred's

71 Pierpont Morgan Library M 319a. It was formerly set into the seventeenth century binding of a Franco-Flemish Gospel book of the first half of the tenth century, but it is of a different origin. See Backhouse, Turner, and Webster, *The Golden Age*, no. 21, where the relationship between this panel, Corpus MS 183, and the Æthelstan Psalter is discussed in more detail.

72 Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, no. 5; Backhouse, Turner, and Webster, *The Golden Age*, no. 4. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson B.484, fol. 85 also belongs to this manuscript.

73 Richard Gameson has recently argued that the Psalter is connected with Winchester and Æthelstan's court in *Royal Manuscripts: The Genius of Illumination*, ed. Scot McKendrick, John Lowden, and Kathleen Doyle (London: 2011), no. 3, 100–101.

74 Simon Keynes, "King Athelstan's Books," in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England: Studies Presented to Peter Clemoes on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss (Cambridge: 1985), 143–201, esp. 193–198.

immediate successors made deliberate use of that heritage, in a manner not so different from that in which they reiterated Alfred's devotion to St. Cuthbert in their gifts to the shrine.

It is all too true that the gaps in what we know about the production of art in Alfred's time, and in his circle, are far greater than the meagre evidence we can muster. All the same, some reasonable speculation can be made about the nature of that which no longer survives; the St Cuthbert embroideries and the early tenth-century sculpture from Wessex, for instance, must have had Alfredian antecedents, reflecting the Carolingian contacts of Alfred's court, and indeed those of his father and grandfather. Such evidence from the reigns of Edward and Æthelstan shows that the influence of Alfred's own *renovatio* is visible into the 930s, and arguably, it extends beyond. More revealing still, those remarkable artifacts that we can with confidence ascribe to Alfred's reign—even, in some cases, his own agency—provide concrete evidence for Alfred's intellectual engagement with the reification of ideas. There is nothing else in the corpus of Anglo-Saxon art to quite compare with, say, the Alfred Jewel or the Fuller brooch in the elegant and ingenious articulation of subtle concepts. We may conclude that here we can still see the track of a creative and powerful mind at work.

Latin Commentaries on Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*

Rosalind Love

Introduction

Boethius wrote his *Consolation of Philosophy* in exile, with execution lying ahead, whether he knew it or not, in about 526. That exile and the confiscation of his property were an abrupt fall from Boethius's key position at the court of Theoderic, king of the Ostrogoths, at Ravenna. Through five books, in alternating prose and verse, the *Consolation* examines the roots of Boethius's grief, to account for why bad things happen to good people while evil men seem to thrive, along the way tackling the question of true happiness and the tension between divine foresight and human free will. Boethius's female interlocutor, Philosophy, embodies the Neoplatonic tradition whose chains of thought lead him towards consolation, albeit ultimately in an unsatisfactory way.¹ Whatever the reader's perspective—that of faith waiting for pagan philosophy to let Boethius down, or of doubt seeking flaws in the divine plan—the unfolding discussion is of great interest. The author's status as both politician and principled thinker, reacting to a terrible crisis in his life, gives the text further appeal, as does the fact that it is gem-studded with references to bygone but alluring literature, mythology and historical figures.

All these facets of the *Consolation* combined to give it a profound influence throughout the Middle Ages, most obviously shown by the variety of vernacular translations, but also by a long tradition of commenting on the text. Before the twelfth century, such commentary principally took the form of marginal and interlinear glossing in copies of the *Consolation*, which was sometimes then collected and written out continuously as so-called *glossae collectae*, each gloss alternating with an abbreviated form of the relevant lemma (that is, the Boethian word or phrase being explained). A few self-contained tenth- and eleventh-century continuous commentaries survive, all of them commenting

1 On the flaws in the *Consolation's* argumentation and their role in exploring the juxtaposition of Christianity and pagan philosophy, see John Marenbon, *Boethius*, Great Medieval Thinkers (Oxford: 2003), Chapter 8.

only upon the ninth metre of Book 3, “O qui perpetua,” the hymn to the divine, perhaps the most-discussed part of the whole work. Leaving those aside, this chapter will focus upon the glosses, with particular emphasis on glossed copies of the *Consolation* in England and their relevance to the Old English *Boethius*.²

Nearly eighty manuscripts of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* survive from the period up to around 1100.³ The oldest copies belong to the first half of the ninth century, and there are almost twenty from that century overall. Few of these are entirely free of annotation, and by the tenth century copies were being produced with such dense glossing that almost no vellum stayed empty. Glossed manuscripts in general often have the most extensive annotation at the start which then peters out, as if the glossator's enthusiasm waned.⁴ There are one or two copies of the *Consolation* like that, but they are the exception: most glossators pressed on, through all five books, with barely diminishing vigour. Some of the later tenth-century manuscripts represent a drive to harvest all available material from more than one copy besides the main exemplar, as well as adding new ideas, leading to a single page offering multiple, even contradictory, glosses for one lemma. Scribes who copied the main text

2 This chapter draws on the work of a project (2007–12) to edit the early Boethian glosses, funded by the Leverhulme Trust, based at the University of Oxford (project website: www.english.ox.ac.uk/boethius) and headed by Malcolm Godden, together with Rohini Jayatilaka, Rosalind Love (University of Cambridge), and Paolo Vaciago (University of Rome III). I am grateful to the Leverhulme Trust for enabling me to devote a year's leave to the project, and I also wish to thank Malcolm and Rohini for inviting me to work with them and for great generosity in sharing their meticulously-collected images of manuscripts and transcriptions of the glosses. All errors here should be regarded as mine rather than those of the project or of my colleagues.

3 Summary lists can be found in Joseph S. Wittig, “King Alfred's *Boethius* and its Latin Sources: A Reconsideration,” *ASE* 11 (1983): 157–198; and his “The ‘Remigian’ Glosses on Boethius's *Consolatio Philosophiae* in Context,” in *Source of Wisdom: Old English and Early Medieval Latin Studies in Honour of Thomas D. Hill*, ed. Charles D. Wright, Frederick M. Biggs, and Thomas N. Hall (Toronto: 2007), 168–200; and in *Boethius*, vol. 1, xlv–vi. Rosalind C. Love, “The Latin Commentaries on Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae* from the 9th to the 11th Centuries,” in *A Companion to Boethius in the Middle Ages*, ed. P.E. Phillips and N.H. Kaylor (Leiden: 2012), 75–133, includes an annotated list based on the working list provided for the Boethius commentary project by Rohini Jayatilaka, who will publish a detailed catalogue in due course. The sigla used for the manuscripts here derive from those assigned by Wittig, with additions and modifications by Dr Jayatilaka.

4 See Michael Lapidge, “The Study of Latin Texts in Late Anglo-Saxon England [1] The Evidence of Latin Glosses,” in *Latin and the Vernacular Languages in Early Medieval Britain*, ed. Nicholas Brooks (Leicester: 1982), 99–140, at 125–126.

sometimes also wrote the accompanying glosses, implying that the two travelled together, though the impulse to collect annotation means that it could also be transmitted independently.

What follows here will examine when and where these layers of glosses originated, by means of a chronological survey of interaction with the *Consolation*, necessarily summary, given the vast array of material to hand. Then we shall ask how the *Consolation* was glossed, looking at examples of the various types of annotation, while at the same time considering instances where the Old English *Boethius* may have drawn on that material. The chapter will conclude with a brief look at the intellectual milieu to which the earliest engagement with the *Consolation* in Britain belongs.

Evidence for Early Responses to the *Consolation*

We do not know what happened to his text immediately after Boethius's execution in the 520s, but there is a theory that it came into the hands of his successor at Theodoric's court, Cassiodorus, who after retiring from administration founded a monastery, known as Vivarium, on his family estate near Squillace (Calabria, Italy). Fabio Troncarelli, in developing this hypothesis, suggested that Cassiodorus had a kind of "scholarly edition" of the text made, which, alongside other features, included some annotation, providing the Greek names for the rhetorical figures which Boethius had used (synecdoche, zeugma, and so on).⁵ Such marginal notes occur in the earliest manuscripts of the *Consolation* and are widely attested among later copies, often in capitals to mimic the Greek majuscules in which they were originally written. Another product of this early phase could have been the translations for Boethius's Greek quotations, transmitted in almost every surviving copy.

Yet a yawning gulf lies between Cassiodorus's day (he died in the 580s) and the earliest extant copies, from the ninth century. The standard account of the transmission of the *Consolation* sees Alcuin of York as a key figure who perhaps encountered the text once he had left England to join the court of Charlemagne on the Continent in about 782.⁶ Although one scholar, again Fabio Troncarelli, suggested that contrary to previous assumptions, the *Consolation* could have been in Anglo-Saxon England already in the late seventh century, his theory

5 Fabio Troncarelli, *Tradizioni Perdute: La "Consolatio Philosophiae" nell'alto medioevo* (Padua: 1981), Chapters 1–2.

6 See Pierre Courcelle, *La Consolation de Philosophie dans la tradition littéraire* (Paris: 1967), 32–47.

has not gained acceptance.⁷ Certainly there is a striking lack of evidence for its presence there that early: no surviving Anglo-Latin texts name Boethius or are known to quote from the *Consolation*, before Alcuin.⁸ Thus it has been posited either that Alcuin discovered an ancient copy of the *Consolation* in Italy or that one had already travelled north, perhaps to Fleury (Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire), which emerges as important for the text's transmission. Fleury had acquired books from Italy, specifically (along with Benedict's relics) from Montecassino, which itself had taken receipt of books from Cassiodorus's library at Vivarium.⁹

The evidence for Alcuin's knowledge of the text was discussed by Pierre Courcelle, the first scholar to survey the manuscripts of the *Consolation* and their annotation for its own sake, rather than as preparation for editing the text or to illuminate the vernacular translations.¹⁰ Alcuin's familiarity with the *Consolation* is visible in his treatise *De uera philosophia* (part of his *Ars grammatica*), and Courcelle assumed that he was responsible for starting Boethius on the journey to medieval best-seller.¹¹ A fascinating question is whether Alcuin could also have begun to expound the *Consolation* in ways that we can still retrieve from surviving manuscripts. Fabio Troncarelli suggested that Alcuin may indeed have commented on the text, and adduces parallels between glosses in the earliest copies of the *Consolation* and Alcuin's writings.¹² The case seems difficult to prove conclusively, and Adrian Papahagi has

7 Troncarelli, *Tradizioni Perdute*, 112–127.

8 Troncarelli, *Tradizioni Perdute*, 107–127.

9 See Adrian Papahagi, "Destin et providence (*Consolatio Philosophiae* IV.pr.6). La réception du néoplatonisme Boécien à l'époque carolingienne," *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres: Comptes rendus des séances de l'année* (2006): 671–711, further elaborated in "The Transmission of Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae* in the Carolingian Age," *Medium Aevum* 78 (2009): 1–15, both reprinted (the former in an English version) in his *Boethiana Mediaevalia: A Collection of Studies on the Early Medieval Fortune of Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy* (Bucharest: 2010).

10 Pierre Courcelle, "Étude critique sur les commentaires de la *Consolation* de Boèce (IXe–XVe siècles)," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 14 (1939): 5–140, revised and reprinted in Courcelle, *La Consolation*, the version to which all future citations here will refer.

11 *La Consolation*, 33–47.

12 Fabio Troncarelli, "Boezio nel circolo di Alcuino: le più antiche glosse carolingie alla *Consolatio Philosophiae*," *Recherches augustiniennes* 22 (1987): 223–241. Troncarelli has restated his case more recently: "Nuove ricerche e vecchi problemi. Note sulla diffusione della *Consolatio Philosophiae* di Boezio in età carolingia," in *Alethes Philia: Studi in onore di Giancarlo Prato*, ed. M. D'Agostino and P. Degni (Spoleto: 2010), 609–686.

pointed out that there were other scholars likely to have been interested in the works of Boethius, such as the learned Theodulf, bishop of Orléans (ca. 798–818) and abbot of Fleury, who could have had just as significant a role in circulating the *Consolation* as that attributed to Alcuin.¹³

In principle, there is no reason why some of the annotation on the *Consolation* could not stem from the early Carolingian era. The oldest copies, dated, as already noted, to the first half of the ninth century, transmit glosses that are contemporary with the copying of the main text and may represent a mix of ancient scholia and newer reflections, even if sparsely compared with later manuscripts. Papahagi has shown that these earlier scholia show a relatively basic engagement with Boethius's work, providing lexical or grammatical glosses and a simple orientation of the discourse within a more overtly Christian scriptural framework.¹⁴ This last is observable even in one-word glosses that specify something as being "of God" or "divine," but a longer example that Papahagi adduces is the following. At 4p6.13 Philosophy discusses the difference between providence and fate, mentioning a succession of Platonic and Stoic ideas about the forces at work:

Siue igitur famulantibus quibusdam prouidentiae diuinis spiritibus fatum exercetur seu anima seu tota inseruiente natura...fatalis series textitur.¹⁵

In Orléans, Bibliothèque municipale, 270 (hereafter **On**), a Fleury manuscript dated to the first third of the ninth century and believed to be the oldest known copy of the *Consolation*, the phrase *famulantibus...spiritibus* was glossed by a hand contemporary with the main text, with the words *spiritu sapientiae et intellectus, spiritu consilii et cetera*, "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of good counsel, etc.," an allusion to Isaiah 11:2. We shall see below how this passage was handled with more sophistication by a later generation (102–103).

13 Papahagi, "Destin et providence," and "The Transmission of Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae*."

14 "Destin et providence," 700–702.

15 "The work of Fate may be performed by divine spirits which are the handmaids, so to speak, of Providence; or else the chain of Fate may be knitted together by the World-Soul, or by the obedience of the whole of nature," trans. P.G. Walsh, *Boethius, the Consolation of Philosophy* (Oxford: 1999), 88. All quotations from the *Consolation* hereafter will be from Ludwig Bieler's edition, CCSL 94 (Turnhout: 1984), with translations from Walsh unless otherwise stated. All translations of the glosses are mine.

Commenting on the Consolation during the Ninth Century: St Gall

Around the mid-ninth century we can confidently identify a scholar who went beyond reading the *Consolation* to writing about it. Servatus Lupus of Ferrières (d. c.862) composed a treatise on the poetic metres which Boethius had used, and the work often travels in manuscripts alongside the *Consolation*, or was excerpted to provide explanations placed next to each metre.¹⁶ Lupus's hand has been identified lightly annotating a ninth-century copy of the *Consolation* (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 14.15), the production of which shows two distinct stages, suggesting that it was begun at a centre in France, perhaps Ferrières itself, and completed at Fulda, where Lupus went to study in the 830s, presumably taking the book with him.¹⁷

While Lupus was responsible for bringing the *Consolation* to Fulda, it travelled further south by other means. From St Gall, and other centres nearby, we have glossed copies and sets of *glossae collectae*, including glosses in Old High German. Pierre Courcelle interpreted the annotation that these copies transmit as a distinct ninth-century commentary on the *Consolation* by a figure he dubbed "Anonymus Sangallensis," whom he regarded as "the oldest known commentator."¹⁸ Since Courcelle's day, much has been done to clarify the nature and affiliations of the St Gall material, in particular by Petrus Tax, from the perspective of his work on the German translation of the *Consolation* by Notker Labeo (a monk of St Gall, d. 1022), but also by scholars focusing on Old High German glosses.¹⁹

The story which can be divined from the surviving copies is more complex than Courcelle implied. Two of St Gall manuscripts are certainly ninth-century and both contain a reasonable number of glosses; the earlier of them is probably Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, IV.G.68 (hereafter N), thought to have been written either around the middle of the ninth century, or during the last quarter, and glossed at about the same time (though some scholars date the

16 Virginia Brown, "Lupus of Ferrières on the Metres of Boethius," in *Latin Script and Letters A.D. 400–900: Festschrift Presented to Ludwig Bieler on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. John J. O'Meara and Bernd Naumann (Leiden: 1978), 63–79.

17 Bernhard Bischoff, "Paläographie und frühmittelalterliche Klassikerüberlieferung," in Bischoff, *Mittelalterliche Studien*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart: 1966–81), vol. 3, 55–72, at 63.

18 Courcelle, *La Consolation*, 259–263, 275–278, with a list of manuscripts at 403–404.

19 Petrus W. Tax (ed.), *Notker latinus zu Boethius, « De consolatione Philosophiae »*, 3 vols., *Die Werke Notkers des Deutschen*, Neues Ausgabe, 1–3A (Tübingen: 2008). See also Rolf Bergmann and Stefanie Stricker, "Die althochdeutschen Boethiusglossen. Ansätze zu einer Überlieferungstypologie," in *Sô wold ich in fröiden singen: Festgabe für Anthonius H. Toubert zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Carla Dauven-van Kippenberg and Helmut Birkhan (Amsterdam and Atlanta, GA: 1995), 13–47.

glossing to the early tenth century).²⁰ St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 844 (hereafter G), from the later ninth century, transmits glosses (again variously dated ninth- or early tenth-century) believed to copy those in N.²¹ Before considering the next stage in this material's development, we should look at theories concerning its origins. Troncarelli drew attention to the fact that some of the glosses in N (and G) are very similar to those in the early ninth-century *On* from Fleury, already mentioned, and he suggested that they may thus represent a "genetic core" ("nucleo genetico") of Carolingian glossing.²² So, for example, the gloss in *On* we looked at above (86), alluding to Isaiah 11:2, also occurs in abbreviated form (*spiritu sapientiae*) in N and G. Troncarelli pointed to other elements of N's glossing and layout that may be ancient, perhaps deriving from the activity of Cassiodorus mentioned above. Thus these St Gall copies already embody the layering of annotation that becomes so obvious in later manuscripts.²³ Both Troncarelli and Papahagi then suggest that the *Consolation* could have reached St Gall from the monastery at Reichenau, which already had a copy in the early 820s, according to surviving inventories.²⁴ It may be that the *Consolation* reached Reichenau from Italy thanks to Hatto (abbot from about 804 until his death in 836), who travelled to Constantinople in a mission sent by Charlemagne in 811, or through the good offices of Hatto's predecessor, Waldo (d. 814), bishop of Pavia for part of his abbacy.²⁵ An alternative hypothesis would be for a copy of the *Consolation* to have travelled eastwards from the Loire region at around this time: successive editors of the work have seen in its textual transmission two main branches, a French family of witnesses and a much larger Germanic one, with the latter descending from an ancestor written somewhere in France.²⁶

20 The earlier dating for both text and gloss is suggested by Papahagi, "Destin et providence," 686; and Troncarelli, "Nuove ricerche," 614, citing a variety of earlier scholars; Tax preferred the later dating for the glosses (*Notker latinus*, 1A, xxxvi), also proposed by Bergmann and Stricker, "Die althochdeutschen Boethiusglossen," 32.

21 Tax, *Notker latinus*, 1A, xxxiii.

22 Troncarelli, "Boezio," 226–231, restated in "Nuove ricerche," 638–641.

23 Troncarelli, "Nuove ricerche," 641–647.

24 Troncarelli, "Nuove ricerche," 624–625; Papahagi, "Destin et providence," 693.

25 For details see Troncarelli, "Nuove ricerche," 626–638, including a discussion of three poems that Hatto addressed to one "Hardulfus" and placed at the beginning and end of a now-lost copy of the *Consolation* which was the exemplar for the tenth-century copy, Metz, Bibliothèque Municipale 377 (destroyed in World War II, though fortunately a description of its contents had already been published).

26 Claudio Moreschini (ed.), *Boethius: De Consolatione Philosophiae. Opuscula Theologica* (2nd revised edition, Munich and Leipzig: 2005), IX; and in more detail "Studi sulla tradizione manoscritta della Consolatio Philosophiae e degli Opuscula Theologica di Boezio," in Moreschini, *Varia Boethiana* (Naples: 2003), 77–134, at 106.

Petrus Tax showed that a later stage of activity at St Gall is represented by an extensive set of *glossae collectae*, copied out continuously for the whole text, and transmitted in two manuscripts which he dated to the late tenth and early eleventh centuries respectively (Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibliothek 179, hereafter **E1**, and St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 845, hereafter **G1**, apparently copied from **E1**).²⁷ These glosses rework and augment the earlier material of **N**, bringing in much of the annotation attributed to Remigius of Auxerre, to which we shall turn shortly. Besides those mentioned so far, several other ninth- and tenth-century glossed copies of the *Consolation* survive from St Gall and the neighbouring area. Yet the material has not so far been published, apart from a doctoral thesis by Grant Roti printing **G1**'s *glossae collectae* for Book 1.²⁸ There is also now a complete transcription by Adrian Papahagi of the *glossae collectae* in the tenth-century manuscript Paris, BnF, lat. 13953, an abbreviated form of the St Gall glosses which Papahagi sees as an intermediate stage between the **N**'s early scattered glosses and the fuller material in **E1** and **G1**.²⁹ It should be clear, then, that the St Gall tradition of glosses, whether at its earliest stage or in the later compilations, cannot easily be spoken of as one individual's commentary.

The Consolation at Auxerre: Remigius and His Predecessors

Courcelle regarded "Anonymus Sangallensis" as a ninth-century commentator on the *Consolation* whose work was then expanded in a commentary by Remigius of Auxerre.³⁰ Scholars before Courcelle had noted that uniquely among all surviving manuscripts, a copy now at Trier (Stadtbibliothek, 1093; hereafter **T**), but written at late-tenth-century Echternach, twice refers to an "expositio" of the *Consolation* by Remigius.³¹ Courcelle observed that the

27 *Notker latinus*, 1A, xxxix–xl.

28 Grant C. Roti, "Anonymus in Boetii Consolationem Philosophiae commentarius ex Sangallensis codice liber primus," Ph.D. diss, State Univ. of New York, Albany, 1979.

29 Papahagi, "Glossae Collectae on Boethius's Consolation of Philosophy in Paris, BN Lat. MS 13953," *Chôra. Revue d'études anciennes et médiévales. Philosophie, théologie, sciences* 6 (2008): 291–337, with discussion of the genesis of the glosses at 295–296, and 305. The article is reprinted in his *Boethiana Mediaevalia*.

30 *La Consolation*, 259–263.

31 Edward K. Rand, *Johannes Scottus. i. Der Kommentar des Johannes Scottus zu den Opuscula sacra des Boethius. ii. Der Kommentar des Remigius von Auxerre zu den Opuscula sacra des Boethius*, Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters, 1.2

glosses in the Trier manuscript occur also in about forty other copies. He then adduced verbal links between this body of annotation and other commentaries attributed to Remigius to suggest that this widely-transmitted material was his exposition of the *Consolation*, composed in the years after Remigius began teaching at Paris in about 900 (he is thought to have died in 908).³²

Courcelle's achievement in surveying so many Boethian manuscripts was immense, but each step in the argumentation by which he assigned a distinct and datable commentary on the *Consolation* to Remigius requires careful scrutiny, since much hangs upon his conclusions. One difficulty lies in defining the contours of this putative commentary: it is not preserved as a free-standing text, nor does there seem to be one manuscript which transmits it as scholia or *glossae collectae* in unmixed form, despite Courcelle's claims. As with the St Gall material, there is no edition of all the glosses Courcelle assigned to Remigius, only excerpts.³³ He used a Paris manuscript as his chief witness (BnF, lat. 15090, written at tenth-century Saint-Evre, Toul; hereafter P7), claiming that it transmitted the material "à peu près sans contamination" ("pretty much uncontaminated").³⁴ In fact P7 also contains glosses which Courcelle himself had identified as part of the St Gall tradition, as does T which, it will be recalled, names Remigius.³⁵ The picture of steady accumulation of glosses that we are beginning to see means that Remigius's contribution may never be

(Munich: 1906), 96; see also Hans Naumann, *Notkers Boethius: Untersuchungen über Quellen und Stil* (Strassburg: 1913), 1–4.

32 Courcelle, *La Consolation*, 242–244 and 254–259, with a list of manuscripts believed to transmit Remigius's commentary at 405–406. Cf. the updated list by Colette Jeudy, "Remigii autissiodorensis opera (Clavis)," in *L'École carolingienne d'Auxerre: de Murethach à Remi 830–908*, ed. Dominique Iogna-Prat, Colette Jeudy, and Guy Lobrichon (Paris: 1991), 457–500.

33 H.F. Stewart printed selections from the *glossae collectae* in a tenth-century Tegernsee manuscript, Krakow, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Berol. Lat. 40, MS 939, under the heading "A Commentary by Remigius Autissiodorensis on the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* of Boethius," *Journal of Theological Studies* 17 (1916): 22–42; selected glosses were also printed by E.T. Silk in *Saeculi Noni Auctoris in Boetii Consolationem Philosophiae Commentarius*, Papers and Monographs of the American Academy in Rome (Rome: 1935).

34 Courcelle, *La Consolation*, 278, note 5.

35 Troncarelli, "Per una ricerca sui commenti altomedievali al *De consolatione* di Boezio," in *Miscellanea in memoria di Giorgio Cencetti* (Turin: 1973), 363–380, at 368–369; and Love, "Latin commentaries," 114–116. In his manuscript catalogue Courcelle did concede that in P7 "a few very scattered glosses from the first Anonymous are included" ("quelques très rares gloses du premier Anonyme y sont insérées"), at *La Consolation*, 405.

completely separable, and one might argue that it is in any case artificial to extricate him from dialogue with earlier glossators.³⁶

Another problem with Courcelle's attempt to match selected glosses with other works believed to be by Remigius is the slippery nature of those other works. Many commentaries have been attributed to Remigius, but few have been published or analysed; as one scholar put it, "there is a striking contrast between the richness of a manuscript tradition that is extremely fluid and an almost complete lack of critical editions."³⁷ The fluidity of medieval commentaries, and the tendency to transmit them anonymously, also means that some early printings of supposed works by Remigius have since been discredited. One example is the commentary on Genesis included in Migne's *Patrologia Latina* (vol. 131.51–134; reprinting an eighteenth-century edition) as a work of Remigius, but subsequently shown to be by Haymo of Auxerre.³⁸ Courcelle cited a passage from the Genesis commentary—that is, Haymo's—as a parallel for three glosses on the *Consolation*, and then used that as evidence for the development of Remigius's thought and proof of the late date for his Boethian "commentary."³⁹

Moreover, from what can be observed of Remigius's methodology, he repeatedly drew on the same basic sources, such as Isidore's *Etymologies*. He cannot have been the only scholar of his day who used such works, so that verbal correspondence between a gloss on the *Consolation* and another Remigian commentary could represent use of a common source rather than guaranteeing a single mind at work. Courcelle's first example is a case in point: he noted that P7 has, in relation to 2p3.9 (*uisne igitur cum Fortuna calculum ponere?* "so do you want to count out the score with Fortune?"), a gloss reporting that the ancients counted off the days with black and white stones and quoting Persius

36 See the comments of Godden and Irvine in *Boethius*, vol. 1, 7–8; and by Papahagi, "Glossae Collectae," 293. A similar situation has been described for the commentaries, including that by Remigius, on Martianus Capella; see Sinéad O'Sullivan (ed.), *Glossae Aevi Carolini in Libros I–II Martiani Capellae De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, CCCM 237 (Turnhout: 2010), xxix–xxxiv.

37 Colette Jeudy, "L'œuvre de Remi d'Auxerre," in Iogna-Prat, Jeudy and Lobrichon, *L'École carolingienne d'Auxerre*, 373: "On est frappé par le contraste entre la richesse de la tradition manuscrite extrêmement mouvante et la carence presque totale d'éditions critiques"; she lists twenty-one works.

38 An edition of Haimo's commentary is in preparation by Burton Van Name Edwards, for CCCM (announced on Edwards's online bibliography, www.tcnj.edu/~chazelle/carindex.htm); Edwards has already edited the genuine exposition on Genesis by Remigius, in CCCM 136 (Turnhout: 1999).

39 *La Consolation*, 243 and 255.

(*Satires* 2.1) in support. Courcelle adduced a similar observation, with the same quote from Persius, in a commentary on Donatus's *Ars Minor* attributed to Remigius.⁴⁰ The gloss on Donatus that Courcelle quoted occurs twice almost verbatim (including the citation from Persius) in a Donatus commentary believed by its editor to be the work of the mid-ninth-century Irish scholar, Sedulius Scottus.⁴¹ Perhaps it was indeed Remigius who lifted a passage from Sedulius's commentary on Donatus into his own and then included the same material in a gloss on the *Consolation*, but the possibility that both gloss and commentary drew separately on Sedulius means that, like the parallels with the Genesis commentary, this one is hardly cast-iron evidence. There is not the space here to work through all ten glosses for which Courcelle provided parallels in putatively Remigian works, but suffice it to say that others are problematic or unconvincing. The intention here is not, however, to deny that Remigius commented on the *Consolation*, but simply to highlight the continuing lack of clarity about the nature of his contribution.

For those interested in parallels between the glossing to the *Consolation* and the Old English *Boethius*, the most important aspect of Courcelle's discussion of the Remigian commentary is the date he assigned to it, after 900. Again the case begins to seem frail upon closer scrutiny. Courcelle admitted that the only way to date the commentary was relative to Remigius's other works, tracing the evolution of his thought. He demonstrated this by means of one example, namely the way in which Philippians 4:7 is quoted in four different commentaries attributed to Remigius.⁴² The procedure seems dangerously subjective: Courcelle arranged the glosses in what seemed to him the "natural order" ("l'ordre naturel") in which Remigius's thought developed, and then, although he conceded that one should use such a means of dating texts with "the greatest care" ("la plus grande prudence"), nonetheless he proceeded to do so.⁴³ He argued that the "commentary" on the *Consolation* could only be

40 *La Consolation*, 242, citing the 1902 Teubner edition by Wilhelm Fox, *Remigii Autissiodorensis In Artem Donati minorem commentum*. The work Fox printed has been shown to be an abbreviated version of the redaction of Remigius's commentary by the tenth-century scholar Israel the Grammarian, making Fox's edition unrepresentative of Remigius; see Jeudy, "L'oeuvre de Remi," 381, and her earlier article "Israël le grammairien et la tradition manuscrite du commentaire de Remi d'Auxerre à l'Ars minor' de Donat," *Studi medievali* 3rd ser. 18 (1977): 751–771.

41 Bengt Löfstedt (ed.), *Sedulius Scottus In Donati artem maiorem* CCM 40B (Turnhout: 1977).

42 *La Consolation*, 255.

43 *La Consolation*, 255.

a late work of Remigius because it draws on so many of his earlier commentaries, which seems anything but proven conclusively by the parallels he adduced.

Crucially, Courcelle felt that Remigius could only have composed his commentary on the *Consolation* after he began expounding Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae*. His reasoning was that the influence of John Scottus Eriugena is discernible in some of the glosses on the *Consolation* and that Remigius could only have encountered John's ideas through his reworking of the latter's exposition of Martianus.⁴⁴ Remigius's teaching on Martianus Courcelle then dated on the basis of the *Vita* of Odo, abbot of Cluny (d. 942), composed after Odo's death by a monk of Cluny, John of Salerno, but supposedly based on Odo's own confessions.⁴⁵ There John described Odo's period of study under Remigius at Paris, including the phrase *et Martianum in liberalibus artibus frequenter lectitauit* ("and he frequently read through Martianus on the Liberal Arts"). Since Odo seems to have left Paris by 903, and Remigius only went there from Reims in 900, upon the death of his patron, Fulk (archbishop of Reims), Courcelle placed Remigius's "course" on Martianus in the years 901–902, and, in the belief that he only started teaching the *Consolation* thereafter, thus dated that commentary to 902–908.⁴⁶ As should be evident, a string of assumptions has to be taken as valid to accept Courcelle's line: that any one glossed copy of either Boethius or Martianus definitively represents Remigius's teaching at Paris, that Remigius could only have encountered Eriugenian thought in a strictly textual manner, and that John of Salerno's testimony is accurate, to name but three.

Remigius began teaching at Auxerre, before being summoned in the mid-880s or early 890s (scholarly opinions differ on this point) to the school at Reims, whence he moved to Paris in 900. Given that the *Consolation* was already in circulation in the Loire region in the first half of the ninth century, there is no reason why he could not have encountered the text significantly earlier than 900. This point was made by Adrian Papahagi, who also suggested that we should consider tracing the strand of glossing Courcelle assigned to Remigius further back, to his teacher Heiric of Auxerre (d. 876), himself a pupil of Lupus, indeed possibly back to Heiric's other teacher Haymo (fl. 840–860).⁴⁷ Certainly since Courcelle's day scholars have significantly

44 *La Consolation*, 256.

45 Ed. *PL* 133.43–86, reprinting a seventeenth-century edition.

46 *La Consolation*, 254–259.

47 "Destin et Providence," 697 and 705.

enhanced our understanding of the school at Auxerre, its personnel and their intellectual ambition.⁴⁸

An intriguing twist in the debate over dating this branch of the gloss tradition comes with the attention drawn by Troncarelli to a copy of the *Consolation* not previously accorded much scholarly notice, Vatican City, BAV, lat. 3865 (hereafter V2). This copy, badly damaged and lacking its original ending, was, according to Troncarelli, written somewhere in France in the last quarter of the ninth century and extensively annotated by the same scribe; the last point is the crucial one, and it is a pity that not all scholars agree on the date of the script used for the glosses.⁴⁹ When placed in the context of the tenth-century manuscripts that Courcelle saw as carrying the Remigian commentary, the badly-faded glosses in V2 repeatedly match up with that material, in particular with the annotation in P7 and T, but also with the English manuscripts we shall consider below. If Troncarelli's (and Bischoff's) suggested early dating for its annotation were to be accepted, V2 would be concrete evidence that the date Courcelle assigned to Remigius's commentary was unnecessarily late.

The Consolation in England

In the amply-annotated tenth-century manuscripts written or used in England, the two already intertwining traditions of glossing which we have traced so far merge fully. Those manuscripts represent an obvious effort to collect annotation on the *Consolation*, a seeming flurry of activity, in particular at Canterbury, with several copies produced in short space, sharing very many glosses, some of them also attested more widely in continental copies and of earlier origin, others apparently unique to this group of manuscripts from England or to subsets of it.⁵⁰

48 For example, John Marenbon, *From the Circle of Alcuin to the School of Auxerre: Logic, Theology, Life and Thought* (Cambridge: 1981); and the 1990 collection of essays edited by Iogna-Prat, Jeudy and Lobrichon, *L'École carolingienne d'Auxerre*.

49 Troncarelli, "Nuove ricerche," 660, cites the opinion on dating of Bernhard Bischoff, who had also suggested Brittany for the book's origins; on this dating see also Papahagi, "Destin et providence," 686, who, however, suggests that the glossing was added in the tenth century. Courcelle dated the whole manuscript to the tenth century (*La Consolation*, 405).

50 For a detailed examination of this material see Malcolm Godden, Rohini Jayatilaka, Rosalind C. Love (ed. and trans.), *The Reception of Boethius's Consolation of Philosophy in Anglo-Saxon England* forthcoming in the series Anglo-Saxon Texts (Woodbridge).

Fourteen complete or fragmentary copies of the *Consolation* survive which were certainly written or annotated in southern England in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries.⁵¹ Diane Bolton studied these manuscripts in her 1965 doctoral thesis, part of which was later published, and she concluded that they transmitted either Courcelle's Remigian commentary or a modified version that she termed the commentary of the "K-reviser" (named after what she regarded as the principal and most fully-annotated carrier of that variant commentary, CUL, Kk.3.21).⁵² Like Courcelle's naming of the "Anonymus Sangallensis," Bolton's usage creates the impression that the work of an individual, this "K-reviser," can be sifted out from the accumulated material in C4 and the manuscripts most closely related to it. In reality, however, the lines cannot be drawn so crisply, in a tradition so strongly inclined towards cross-pollination.⁵³ To be sure C4 has some distinctive glosses that are peculiar to it and to just one or two other English manuscripts, but these are just part of the mass of annotation in its crowded margins.

Alongside these copies from England, clustered either side of the year 1000, we must place the early ninth-century Fleury (or Orléans) manuscript which, passing via Cornwall, had reached England, probably Glastonbury, by the mid-tenth century, namely Vatican City, BAV, lat. 3363 (hereafter V1). At each stage of its life, this book was annotated, though the glossing is now badly abraded and sometimes barely legible. Significant as evidence of one possible trajectory for the circulation of the *Consolation* in Britain, V1 is also important for establishing how much of the commentary in the late tenth-century copies of the *Consolation* could have been available earlier. Malcolm Godden has shown that there is notable correspondence between the glossing in V1 and the later English copies; indeed V1 may have been one of the sources used by those so

51 A closely-interrelated group consists of Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, M.16.8 (190) [A]; the now-fragmentary CCCC 214 [C]; CUL, Kk.3.21 [C4]; El Escorial, Real Biblioteca, E.II.1 [Es]; a manuscript formerly Cologny-Genève, Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, Cod. 175 but in private hands since 2005 [Ge]; Paris, BnF lat. 6401A [P], lat. 14380 [P6] and lat. 17814 [P9]. More distantly related are Cambridge, Trinity College O.3.7 [C2], CUL, Gg.5.35 [C3]; London, BL, Egerton 267 (just one leaf, fol. 37) [L2]; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct. F.1.15 [O]; and Paris, BnF lat. 6401 [P13].

52 Summarised in Diane K. Bolton, "The Study of the Consolation of Philosophy in Anglo-Saxon England," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 44 (1977): 33–78.

53 For a critique of Bolton's analysis see Malcolm Godden and Rohini Jayatilaka, "Counting the Heads of Hydra: The Development of the Early Medieval Commentary on Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*," in *Carolingian Scholarship and Martianus Capella*, eds. Sinéad O'Sullivan and Marien Teeuwen, Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages (Turnhout: 2011), 363–376, at 366–370.

avidly compiling all available scholia on the *Consolation* towards the end of the tenth century.⁵⁴

The Old English Boethius and the Glosses on the Consolation

From Georg Schepss onwards scholars have returned repeatedly to the question of whether the Old English translation of the *Consolation* drew on glosses to the text. Enquiry has ranged from attempts at using individual specimens of glossed copies in order to demonstrate influence to rejection of the proposition on the basis of sampling across a large number of manuscripts.⁵⁵ Earlier efforts were hampered by the fact that the glosses are scattered across eighty manuscripts, and then the issue was rendered more problematic by Courcelle's over-precise categorisations and his late dating of the "commentary" by Remigius to the early tenth century. Obviously that dating would exclude the possibility that the material Courcelle had assigned to Remigius was available to Alfred's circle of scholars, and Courcelle himself consequently assumed that the St Gall tradition of glossing was the more influential for the Old English *Boethius*.⁵⁶ Troncarelli's recent highlighting of a possibly late ninth-century copy with demonstrably Remigian glosses, if accepted, would put the difficulty aside. But even if an early dating for V2's glosses cannot be accepted, the principle that the Remigian commentary is actually annotation that had built up over a longer period, and might more correctly be termed the ninth-century Auxerre tradition of glossing, means that we could envisage a copy of the *Consolation* with a reasonably full set of such glosses reaching England towards the end of that century. Remigius was teaching at Reims Cathedral school around, or not long after, the period when King Alfred was in negotiation with Fulk, archbishop of Reims, about acquiring the assistance of Grimbald of Saint-Bertin; Fulk himself had summoned Remigius to teach at Reims.⁵⁷

54 Malcolm Godden, "Alfred, Asser, and Boethius," in *Latin Learning and English Lore: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge*, ed. Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe and Andy Orchard, 2 vols. (Toronto: 2005), vol. 1, 326–348, at 337–340. On the likely journey made by this manuscript, see also Patrick Sims-Williams, "A New Brittonic Gloss on Boethius: *ud rocashaas*," *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 50 (2005): 77–86.

55 Developments in scholarship succinctly described by Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 54–55.

56 *La Consolation*, 268–269.

57 Fulk's letter to Alfred on the matter of Grimbald is printed in D. Whitelock *et al.* (eds.), *Councils & Synods: with other Documents relating to the English Church*, 2 vols. (Oxford: 1964–81), vol. 1, 6–12. See also the translation by K&L, 182–186. Remigius's summons to

This chain of personal connections could very easily be one along which books and ideas might pass. It has already been shown that one of the striking changes to the Boethian text in the Old English version (B-text Chapter 17), on the three orders of society ("prayer-men and army-men and work-men"), seems indebted, even if at some remove, to an idea developed against the backdrop of the West Frankish court by Haymo and Heiric.⁵⁸

With the publication of the new edition of the Old English *Boethius*, the influence of glosses upon it may at least be deemed to have been demonstrated comprehensively. The work of Godden and Jayatilaka has uncovered "over thirty cases of extremely probable influence, most of them not noticed before, as well as a much greater number of close parallels."⁵⁹ Most compelling are cases where no other source for the Old English translator's distinctive interpretation of the Latin has been found apart from glosses offering very striking agreement. There are instances where it is arguable that both glossator and translator used the same earlier sources, and then the debt of the latter to the former must be proved by subtle variations in wording.

Simple common-sense suggests that whoever made the translation into Old English had a glossed copy of the text, whether it was King Alfred himself with assistance from the scholars working most closely with him, or an individual working at his behest, or even someone inspired to follow in Alfred's footsteps slightly later on. Few surviving copies of the *Consolation* from before 1100 are entirely free of annotation, and it was a work that was, indeed needed to be, studied with the help of scholia. Some parts of the text were closed off from direct access by most medieval readers soon after Boethius's time, such as the quotations in Greek, often badly mangled throughout the textual tradition but supplied in most manuscripts with sometimes rather inaccurate Latin translations. It would have been perverse in the extreme to try to interpret the work while pointedly ignoring the helps to the reader that accompanied it. We cannot pin down one surviving manuscript which provides the best match with the Old English version; Troncarelli had hoped to see in the earlier Insular annotation in V1 a "commentary" by Asser, but scholars have tended to regard that view as over-optimistic, and V1's glossing overall is not the closest to the

Reims by Fulk is recorded in Flodoard's tenth-century *Historia Remensis ecclesiae*, IV.9, ed. J. Heller and G. Waitz, MGH SS 13 (Hannover: 1881), 574.

58 *Boethius*, vol. 1, 277 and vol. 2, 26, 318; see also E. Ortigues, "L'élaboration de la théorie des trois ordres chez Haymon d'Auxerre," *Francia* 14 (1986): 27–43, Anton Scharer, *Herrschaft und Repräsentation: Studien zur Hofkultur König Alfreds des Grossen* (Vienna: 2000), 104; and David Pratt, *The Political Thought of King Alfred the Great* (Cambridge: 2007), 293.

59 *Boethius*, vol. 1, 55.

Old English translation.⁶⁰ Godden and Irvine point to the group of late tenth- and early eleventh-century copies written or used in England, already discussed above, as offering some of the most convincing parallels.⁶¹ There is no difficulty with this conclusion, since, as already noted, the intertwined layers of annotation in those books transmit the work of earlier glossators from diverse sources, and contain unmistakeable indications that they drew on glossed books or sets of glosses that have since been lost.⁶²

What did the Glossators Comment Upon?

In order to convey an impression of the ways in which glosses explicate the *Consolation*, this section will describe the principal types of annotation found in the extant manuscripts, though this chapter's limited scope requires us to generalise somewhat and consider just a few examples from very many indeed.⁶³ We shall couple this with a look at one or two instances where the Old English translation seems likely to have used the glosses. Students of the *Consolation* in Old English who wish to see for themselves the detail of how the translator was influenced by glosses should turn to the extensive annotation in the second volume of the edition by Godden and Irvine. What follows here is based entirely on parallels discussed there, or by other scholars.

The first two types we shall examine concern themselves either with straightforward assistance in construing the text or with the study of the *Consolation* as a specimen of high-grade Latin. Beyond that we move, with the third and fourth types, to a more profound exegesis of Boethius's words. When one asks how these different levels of annotation might show themselves in

60 *Tradizioni Perdute*, 137–196; the best assessment of Troncarelli's work on the Vatican manuscript, and a respectful rejection of the suggested link to Asser, is Godden, "Alfred, Asser, and Boethius."

61 *Boethius*, vol. 1, 57.

62 The tenth-century English manuscripts have some long marginal glosses which include lemmata embedded within them and are thus not actually continuous commentary on a single lemma, but a cluster of shorter glosses and lemmata mistakenly lifted together, by all appearances, from a set of *glossae collectae* like those in the tenth-century Krakow manuscript used to provide samples of the Remigian glossing by Stewart, "A Commentary by Remigius Autissiodorensis," or similar in form to E1 and G1 from St Gall.

63 The full corpus of annotation found in all pre-1100 manuscripts will eventually be accessible as Malcolm Godden, Rohini Jayatilaka, Rosalind C. Love, and Paolo Vaciago (eds.), *Corpus Glosarum super Boetium, De Consolatione Philosophiae, saeculorum IX–XI*, CCCM (Turnhout).

the work of a translator or adapter of the *Consolation*, then it should be fairly obvious that glosses intended to ease the construing of the text will be subsumed within the very mental process of translation and are likely to leave but the faintest traces. In other words, influence from one-word glosses is hard to prove beyond all doubt, as Godden and Irvine note.⁶⁴ Moreover, glosses in the first group below, while meant primarily or originally to facilitate comprehension, often proceed to make pedagogical capital from a point, as one might well do if teaching the text. While the Old English translator may have benefited from that kind of annotation, his concern was to make Boethius's words accessible and relevant rather than to comment on them in this very obviously didactic fashion. Thus our third and fourth classes of more firmly interpretative exegesis show themselves the most clearly within the translator's work; his interest in the *Consolation* was not primarily philological but rather ideological.

(i) *Lexical, Grammatical, Syntactical, and Rhetorical Glossing*

The simplest level of commentary on the *Consolation*, as upon other Latin texts studied in Anglo-Saxon England, is lexical glossing which supplies the lemma with a synonym or phrase, or even a string of synonyms, as if to expand the reader's vocabulary or perhaps in the quest for the correct nuance. Glosses annotate the Latin principally with more Latin, but also in rare cases with Old English, sometimes scratched by a dry point and therefore quite challenging to read under modern lighting conditions. These vernacular notes are paralleled by the many Old High German glosses found in copies of the *Consolation*, with the key difference that the German is often veiled from the reader by the use of cryptography, whereas the Old English seems hidden now but was perhaps not intended to be.⁶⁵

There are no copies from England where lexical glossing is comprehensive (that is, covering every word), and its coverage is never predictable. As Gernot Wieland observed in relation to glossed copies of Prudentius's *Psychomachia*, it is not immediately obvious whom such patchy vocabulary helps were supposed to guide.⁶⁶ The reader needing the very basic assistance some glosses offer might be stumped by other words that go unglossed; but it is probably wisest to bear in mind the cumulative nature of glossing which thus reflects a

64 *Boethius*, vol. 1, 57.

65 About a third of all glosses on the *Consolation* in Old High German use cryptography; see Bergmann and Stricker, "Die althochdeutsche Boethiusglossen," 38–42.

66 "The Glossed Manuscript: Classbook or Library Book?," *ASE* 14 (1985): 153–173, at 161–162.

variety of requirements, right up to the sophisticated reader who may nonetheless be grateful for help in perusing the text swiftly.

Similarly directed towards grasping the nuance of Boethius's intentions are glosses which explain points of morphology (suggesting an alternative verb-ending, or another prefix for a verb or noun), grammar (why a noun is in the case that it is, for example) and syntax (noting the antecedent of a relative pronoun, linking adjectives to the correct nouns).⁶⁷ Glossing of this kind can sometimes go beyond the need to explicate the meaning to helpful observations of an overtly didactic kind (for example “the noun elephant in Latin can be *elephantus*—*i* [second declension] or *elephas*—*ntis* [third declension],” annotating 3p8.7). Since the *Consolation* is a dialogue between Boethius and Philosophy, another type of relatively elementary annotation distinguishes changes of speaker.

A step up from grammar are glosses identifying rhetorical schemes and tropes. As already mentioned, some of these may descend from a very early stage in annotating the *Consolation*, and they are found in many surviving manuscripts, often in majuscules, occasionally even in colour or otherwise highlighted, as if they were seen as especially important. Often one word—*ZEUMA*, *YRONIA*, *SYNECDOCHE*—these glosses assume prior knowledge of the workings of the trope in question, because they are seldom accompanied by an explanation. That said, some of them seem far from being well-known, such as *SCHEMA DIANOIAS* and *HYRMOS*.

The glossing for a sentence of prose in two ninth-century manuscripts already mentioned above (V1 from Fleury/Orléans, and N from St Gall) will serve to illustrate some of this. Boethius opened book 3 thus:

Iam cantum illa finiuerat, cum me audiendi audum stupentemque
arrectis adhuc auribus carminis mulcedo defixerat.⁶⁸

V1 glosses the noun *cantum* with *modulationem* (“measure” or “melody”) and notes that *illa* is “Philosophy”; for *audum* it provides a synonym, *cupidum*, “desirous,” but helpfully places it, in anticipation, over the gerund in the genitive

67 For a discussion of syntactical glossing, including one of the most remarkable examples of “syntactical lettering” in the fragmentary manuscript of Boethius, CCCC 214, see F.C. Robinson, “Syntactical Glosses in Latin Manuscripts of Anglo-Saxon Provenance” *Speculum* 48 (1973): 443–475, especially 447–449 and associated plates.

68 “Philosophy had by now ended her song. As I listened eagerly, its sweetness had held me spellbound, and I remained dumbstruck with my ears still pricked” (trans. Walsh, *Boethius*, 40).

(i.e. *audiendi*) that depends on *audum*, and then glosses *stupentem* with *mirantem* ("marvelling"); up to this point N stays silent. For the ablative absolute phrase *arrectis adhuc auribus* V1 again just has a lexical gloss for the past participle *arrectis*, namely *eleuatis* ("raised"), whereas N offers a phrase, *paratis ad audiendum* ("prepared for listening"), but then also the word *kacemphaton* (Greek κακεμφατον, "ill-sounding expression"), an example of the Greek rhetorical glosses just mentioned.⁶⁹ Next, V1 labels the rare noun *mulcedo* with the slightly commoner *dulcedo* ("sweetness") while N has the pairing *lenitas* (mistakenly written as *leuitas*, correctable in light of other St Gall manuscripts) *uel suauitas* ("mildness or sweetness"). Finally, as another example of lexical annotation that is not quite a synonym, the verb *defixerat* is glossed *intentum fecerat* ("had made attentive") by both manuscripts, possibly an instance of the "genetic core" of early glossing which Troncarelli highlighted. All this would give the reader a reasonable understanding of what is going on, with a fairly strong emphasis on vocabulary; yet sufficient competence is assumed that we are not, for example, alerted to the potentially confusing switch of subject (from *illa* to *mulcedo*) in the second clause.

It is worth noting that alongside this fairly basic annotation, the manuscripts taken as transmitting "Remigian" commentary (including some English ones) have a longer comment: *solent enim intendentes etiam oculos claudere aliquando, ne sensus exteriores mentem distrahant. Oculi enim per hoc quod extra percipiunt mentem infra perturbant* ("for listeners are also wont to shut their eyes sometimes, so that outside impressions do not distract the mind. For by means of what they perceive outwardly the eyes may trouble the mind within"). The point that Boethius's listening was that of the inner mind finds a noteworthy parallel, put rather more succinctly, in the Old English paraphrase of this opening, at c. 22: *ic his wæs swiðe wafiende and swiðe lustbære hine to gehiranne mid innewardum mode* ("I was greatly amazed at it and very willing to hear it with inner mind").⁷⁰

(ii) *Paraphrase or Summary*

Longer, but still fairly basic, glosses point the reader forwards and backwards within the discourse: "here he refers to what she said before," "this she will discuss further below," and the like. Then others summarise the discourse, along

69 Why this phrase should be marked as ugly can be explained by reference to the Latin grammarians: Donatus, for example, in his *Ars maior* (III.3) exemplifies cacemphaton with the Terentian phrase *arripe aures, Pamphile!* ("prick up your ears, Pamphilus!"), both aurally inelegant and vulgar too.

70 *Boethius* vol. 1, B 22.2–3, and vol. 2, 32.

the lines of “the tenor of this metre consists entirely in comparisons, by which it is shown that nothing should be done out of the proper order...” (summarising 1m6).⁷¹

(iii) *Metaphors, Allegorical Reading, Christianising Commentary*

Passing beyond simple paraphrase is the kind of gloss which unpacks Boethius’s metaphors, forming a sort of basic allegorical reading of the *Consolation*.⁷² In the same spirit are annotations which investigate the moral message to be derived from the *Consolation* and occasionally pass judgement on its argumentation. Not surprisingly, medieval glossators were keen to highlight the Christian God in the exiled Boethius’s words and to read them in the light of Scripture and the works of the Fathers. We have already seen a simple example of this kind of annotation to 4p6.13, in one of the earliest copies of the *Consolation* (86 above). Alongside precisely the same controversial passage, in a large number of manuscripts from centres on the Continent and England, we find a gloss (commenting on the phrase *caelestibus siderum motibus* in 4p6.13) that has been used as evidence of the unfolding medieval debate on the text:

hoc in loco quidam conati sunt Boetium reprehendere quasi hereticum dicentes illum mathematicam [or mathematicum] sectari et docere omnia sub fato stellarum fieri, sed sciendum quia ubi plura succincte et comprehensiue memorantur, ignoratur quid debeat eligi, quid eligendum uel quid respondendum sit.⁷³

Courcelle interpreted this as a gloss by Remigius responding to one by the “Anonymus Sangallensis,” *hic magis philosophice quam catholice loquitur* (“here he speaks more like a philosopher than a catholic believer”).⁷⁴ To understand Boethius as articulating more than one perspective, at times voicing the view

71 “Tenor huius metri totus comparationibus constat quibus ostenditur quia nihil extra ordinem debet fieri...” (quoted from A).

72 The notion of allegorical interpretation as a feature of both the Latin “commentaries” and the OE *Boethius* was explored by K. Otten, *König Alfreds Boethius*, Studien zur englischen Philologie, neue Folge 3 (Tübingen: 1964), 141–151.

73 “At this point some have tried to accuse Boethius of being almost a heretic, saying that he follows astrology (or in some versions the astrologer) and teaches that all things come about under the fate of the stars; but it should be recognised that where several things are mentioned briefly and in an abbreviated way, it is not known what ought to be preferred, which is to be preferred or which rejected.”

74 *La Consolation*, 261–262.

of the common crowd, is certainly a more sophisticated approach than unthinking dismissal, and shows a sense of his place in relation to the world of ancient logic that Alcuin was just beginning to guess at.

An example of the provision of illustrative examples from Christian literature is a widely-attested gloss to 4p6.36 (*parcit itaque sapiens dispensatio ei quem deteriore facere possit aduersitas, ne cui non conuenit laborare patiatur*).⁷⁵ It recounts a story from the *Passion* of St Julian of Antioch about a woman imprisoned for being a Christian to whom God grants death, foreknowing that she would not withstand torment. Boethius did not in this context speak of death, only affliction, but thinking along the same lines as the glosses, the Old English translation (c. 39) at this point observes of God, *ge furðum þone deað þe eallum gecynde is to þolienne he him gedēð sefran onne oðrum monnum* ("he even makes the death which it is natural to all to suffer easier for them [holy and righteous men] than for other people").⁷⁶

Looking to the Old English *Boethius* for allegorising or Christianising amplifications to the original, we can consider an example which highlights the translator's artistic imagination as much as it does the probable influence of glossing. The B-text's prose rendering of 1m2 includes two explicit recastings of allusively poetic turns of phrase in the Latin.⁷⁷ Lines 2–3 of the metre run thus: *mens hebet et propria luce relictā / tendit in externas ire tenebras* ("the mind grows dull and leaving behind its own light, bends its course to go into the darkness beyond"). Two elements of this are expanded in the Old English version: *propria luce relictā* becomes *his ahgen leoht, þæt is ece gefea* ("its own light, that is eternal bliss") and *tendit in externas ire tenebras* becomes *ðringð on þa fremdan þistro, þæt sind woruldsorga* ("presses on into the alien darkness, that is, the sorrows of the world"). The Boethian contrast of innate light and alien outer darkness is thus strengthened by amplifications emphasising a contrast between the heavenly life, the soul's proper homeland, and that of this world, and between opposed emotional states, joy and sorrow. It is then interesting to see how the translator might have found these lines annotated. The phrase *propria luce* attracted glosses such as *ratione* or *naturali ratione* ("reason," "native reason"), or *ratione sapientiae* ("wisdom's reason"), and others explicitly theologise, with variations on the basic theme *deo et sapientia relictis* ("leaving behind God and wisdom"), found in the group of late

75 "A wise dispensation spares that person, to ensure that he does not suffer an ordeal which would be unsuitable in his case" (trans. Walsh, *Boethius*, 90).

76 *Boethius* B 39.263–64 and vol. 2, 85.

77 See the discussion of this passage by Otten, *König Alfreds Boethius*, 146–147; for the metre, see B 3.21–26.

tenth-century English copies already mentioned, or *lumine scientiae per quam meretur cognitio dei* ("the light of knowledge, by means of which knowledge of God is earned") in *On*, or *scientiae uel fide Christiana siue diuino adiutorio. Propriam lucem relinquit, qui Deo se alienauerit, quia uera lux est* ("knowledge or Christian faith or divine aid. He who has separated himself from God, abandons his own light, because [God] is the true light") in the fullest set of tenth-century St Gall glosses (E1). It may be that the Old English translator was drawn by a gloss of this kind to read the reference to light as that of heaven, rather than of intellectual illumination, but one could just as easily argue that his poetic imagination independently shaped the contrasting pairs he produced. As for line 3 of 1m2, glossators interpreted the verb *tendit*, which can just mean straightforward movement in a particular direction, variously with *laborat* ("strives"), *studet* ("pursues eagerly") or, in the St Gall manuscripts, *festinat* ("hastens"). It may be this last could have inclined towards the use of the Old English *þringan*. More compelling, though, as Godden and Irvine note (II.263), is the evidence of the glosses for *externas...tenebras*: they cite *in curas et sollicitudines temporales* ("into cares and earthly/temporary worries"), found in several English and continental copies, though there is also striking correspondence with the alternative *perturbationes seculi* ("troubles of the world") in some manuscripts, including one from England, which in fact offers both glosses.⁷⁸

At the conclusion of Book 2 prose 4, Philosophy alludes to the *multos* ("many") who sought blessedness not just in death but in pain and torture. Unsurprisingly, the Old English translator makes this more emphatically a reference to the Christian past: "Indeed, we certainly know countless people who have sought the eternal felicities not only through desiring bodily death but also that they desired many painful punishments in exchange for the eternal life; those were the holy martyrs."⁷⁹ Many manuscripts gloss *multos* as *sanctos* or *martyres* ("saints," "martyrs"), but it is noteworthy that some twenty manuscripts (including V2) have a longer gloss here too, which reframes Philosophy's words in terms very similar to the Old English:

hic sanctos martires uult intellegi qui ut beatitudinem perhennem acciperent. diuersa tormenta potius quam simplicem mortem desiderabant.⁸⁰

78 This is the gloss to which Otten drew attention, *König Alfreds Boethius*, 146.

79 Godden and Irvine vol. 1, 263, trans. vol. 2, 17 and notes vol. 2, 296. See also the discussion in Nicole Guenther Discenza, *The King's English: Strategies of Translation in the Old English Boethius* (Albany, NY: 2005), 133.

80 "Here he wishes the holy martyrs to be understood, who desired various torments rather than simple death in order that they might receive eternal blessedness."

(iv) *Encyclopaedic Glosses*

The wide variety of people and things to which Boethius referred means that much of the longer marginal glossing is dedicated to commentary of an encyclopaedic nature, seeking to answer questions such as: Who were Regulus and Canius? What is a curule seat? Who was Atrides? Here again these glosses, covering matters historical, mythological, astronomical, and botanical, often transcend the need to unpack Boethius's rather opaque allusions, going on to provide further information extraneous to the argument of the *Consolation*. Just one sample of this type of annotation must suffice here.

In Book 2, metre 7, Philosophy sings of the short-lived nature of worldly fame, and at lines 15–16 lets slip the names of three once-renowned men, Fabricius, Brutus, and Cato. The lines are well-known to students of the Old English *Boethius* for the substitution there of the Germanic hero Weland for Fabricius, a consul in the 280s and 270s BC and famed for the fact that he would never take bribes. Glosses against the name Fabricius range from the simple “consul” found in **On**, via the basic information provided in the earliest of the St Gall manuscripts (**N**), “Who was most faithful to everyone, fighting against King Pyrrhus” (*Qui fidelissimus omnibus erat, contra Pyrrum regem pugnans*), to a pair of much fuller glosses added in the tenth century to **V1**:

Fabricius fuit rex romanorum qui propterea dicitur fidelis quia rempublicam seruauit. Ipse respondit legatis Samnitum offerentibus aurum dicens romanus populus non aurum sed possidentes aurum querit possidere.⁸¹

Aliter: de isto Fabricio dicunt historici quod cum ad quandam perrexisset gentem causa debellandi et ne penitus eos debellaret, poposcerunt ut acciperet in redemptione quantum uoluisset aurum. Quo accepto reuersus est Romam cum uictoria. Quo audito Romani indignati fuderunt aurum in ore illius et dixerunt ‘satiare auro’.⁸²

The first of these is broadly comparable in content, if not exact phrasing, to a gloss found in some thirteen continental manuscripts; but it is followed nearly

81 “Fabricius was a king of the Romans who is called faithful because he protected the republic. He replied to the legates of the Samnites, who were offering gold, saying, “The Roman populace seeks not to possess gold but to possess those who possess gold.”

82 “Alternatively. The historians say of this Fabricius that when he had gone to a certain people for the sake of vanquishing them and they begged him not to vanquish them utterly but rather to accept as much gold as he wished as a bribe. Having accepted this, he returned to Rome with victory. But when they heard of it, the Romans were enraged and poured the gold in his mouth and said ‘be sated with gold!’”

verbatim by eight of the tenth- and eleventh-century English manuscripts. V1's second gloss, beginning, *aliter*...and offering a quite different, indeed contradictory account, from a hitherto unidentified source, is also present in four English manuscripts: two of these also have the first gloss, a third has the continental version of the first gloss, and a fourth has both versions of the first gloss as well as V1's *aliter* gloss (i.e. three glosses in all), representing an extreme of the drive to amass glosses indiscriminately. That the Old English translation wrote Fabricius out of the story entirely and substituted Weland is a striking touch of originality that also neatly avoids any uncertainty about Fabricius's story.⁸³

It is instructive to press on and examine how the next two names, Brutus and Cato, are handled by the glossators and the Old English translator. Boethius himself, writing only *quid Brutus aut rigidus Cato?* ("what about Brutus or unmoved Cato?"), gave no hint as to which of the men by those names he had in mind.⁸⁴ The simplest glosses offer *consul romanorum* (V1) or *primus consul romanorum castusque* (the earliest St Gall manuscripts) for Brutus ("first consul" meaning Lucius Junius Brutus, hailed as the founder of the Republic); a few add *qui semetipsum interemit* ("who killed himself") or the like, which is applicable to Marcus Junius Brutus, famous for having assassinated Julius Caesar. *Rigidus Cato* attracted more detail, much of it seeking to account for the epithet, thought to derive from this Cato's inauguration of harsh laws (in one of the earliest manuscripts, **On**), or from the fact that he retained long hair and a beard in order to look older (*senior*), or more savage (*saeuior*—manuscripts vary on their reading here). But shorter glosses also denote Cato as *philosophus* or *ensorinus*; *semel in uita risit*; *in moribus quoque fortissimus* (E1; "the censor; he laughed only once in his life; also very vigorous in his morals"). At least two manuscripts describe Cato as a consul, and that is the line taken in the Old English translation, which expands the Boethian line thus: *Oððe hwær is nu se foremæra and se aræda Romwara heretoga se wæs haten Brutus, oðre naman Cassius? Oððe se wisa and fæstræda Cato, se wæs eac Romana heretoga, se wæs openlice uðwita?* (B 20.20–24; "Or where is now the famous and resolute consul of the Romans who was called Brutus, and by a second name Cassius? Or the wise and steadfast Cato, who was also a consul of the Romans, who was

83 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 2, 326–327, note that the way Weland's skill is described as being as unshakeable as the sun in its course echoes a saying known to have been applied to Fabricius, not found in any extant gloss on this passage, but perhaps derived from one now lost.

84 Cf. the discussion of the glossing for this passage in Godden and Jayatilaka, "Counting the Heads of Hydra," 372–374.

openly a philosopher?" vol. 2, 30). Strikingly, the earliest St Gall manuscript (N) has two glosses to this line, one in the left margin, next to Brutus (*primus consul romanorum castusque*), and then a second, next to the name Cato, in the right margin, *Cassius; censorinus; moribus fortis* ("Cassius; the censor; steadfast in his morals"). Neither gloss is explicitly linked to a specific lemma, and only the fact that they are placed next to the relevant line indicates what they should be taken as referring to, so it is possible that a copy of the *Consolation* similarly carrying the second gloss (*Cassius. Censorinus*), actually meant for Cato but not obviously so, prompted the slightly odd observation in the Old English that Cassius was the "other name" for Brutus. A gloss unique to the tenth-century English manuscripts also supplies the verb that goes unspoken in line 16, noting *ubinam discesserunt*, "for where have they gone?" which, although an entirely logical amplification, finds a parallel in the Old English *Hu ne wæran þas gefyrn forðgewitene* (B 20.24–25; "Did these not depart long ago?").

By the late tenth century, as we have seen, there were copies of the *Consolation* with very extensive annotation indeed: books like C4 represent a powerful drive to go well beyond simply illuminating the Boethian text, to the accumulation of "marginal" knowledge for its own sake. That process was already underway through the course of the ninth century, leaving us with the strong probability that any copy of the *Consolation* reaching England toward the end of that century would have had a reasonable degree of annotation. If the Old English translator has been shown to draw on a relatively modest proportion of all the historical, mythological and other kinds of information that may have been to hand, that is largely because his priority was to make a valuable text accessible rather than to heap up knowledge whose relevance might not always have seemed obvious.⁸⁵

The Intellectual Context for Beginning to Read Glossed Boethius in England

The paths of Grimbald of Saint-Bertin and Remigius of Auxerre may never have crossed, but the point of contact between the two men was Fulk, archbishop of Reims, whose high regard for the former meant that only regretfully did he allow him to go to England at Alfred's request and who is said to have

85 This is the assessment of Pratt, *Political Thought*, 272 ("inclusion of material depended primarily on its contextual relevance to what was often a distinctive reading of the source-text").

summoned the latter to teach at the Cathedral school at Reims. As we have seen, Remigius belonged to a line of scholarly teachers who, throughout the ninth century, worked at recovering and studying Classical and late antique texts. Though only one author among the many under scrutiny, Boethius seems to have had a central place; by the end of the ninth century, his works, not just the *Consolation* but his logical writings too, circulated, like others of their kind, in glossed manuscripts that were the equivalent of our annotated scholarly editions.⁸⁶ If Alfred turned to Archbishop Fulk for help in restoring ecclesiastical order, then it is likely that the intellectual values of schools such as Reims and Auxerre would also have seemed an aspiration, and that their libraries were among the sources that supplied the steady stream of manuscripts—including such “scholarly editions”—brought in to rebuild England’s libraries.⁸⁷

Just one in that steady stream was V₁, which, as already mentioned, had reached England by the tenth century, but hailed originally from ninth-century France and was glossed both there as also in Cornwall and at Glastonbury, reminding us that points further west also contributed to the revival of learning in Wessex. The narrative traced for that book and its relationship to other copies of the *Consolation* can be told again for the transmission of other works. One well-documented example is the fourth-century *Libri Euangeliorum Quattuor*, a hexametrical rendering of the Gospels by the Spaniard Juvenius: as shown by Michael Lapidge, by the tenth century copies of this popular work had reached England from various directions—Italy, France, and Wales—bringing with them earlier glosses which were then supplemented or transferred from copy to copy.⁸⁸ A more directly relevant case is Orosius’s *Historiarum aduersus paganos libri septem*. The Old English *Orosius* shows clear signs of influence by commentary on its Latin source, even though we no longer have a manuscript of the text known to have been in England in the late ninth century.⁸⁹ Again, parallels with the extra information deployed in the Old English

86 See Margaret T. Gibson, “Boethius in the Carolingian Schools,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 32 (1982): 43–56, who highlighted one such book, an Auxerre compilation (Paris, BnF, lat. 12949) that includes Boethius’s *Opuscula sacra*, his translations of the *Isagoge* and Aristotle’s *On Interpretation*, all supplied with glosses; the book’s glosses on the Aristotelian *Categories* also occur, with other dialectical materials, in CCC 206, assigned to the first half of the tenth century and possibly Canterbury (Gneuss no. 67).

87 Michael Lapidge lists manuscripts that may have reached England thanks to Grimbald in *The Anglo-Saxon Library* (Oxford: 2006), 49 and note 87; see also his Appendix D, ninth-century MSS of Continental origin that had reached England by 1066.

88 Lapidge, “The Study of Latin Texts,” 108–113.

89 The MSS of Orosius were surveyed by Janet Batley, who summarised her findings in “King Alfred and the Latin MSS of Orosius’ History,” *Classica et Mediaevalia* 22 (1961): 69–105.

Orosius can be found both in later glossed copies, and also in ninth-century continental manuscripts, including a Hiberno-Latin commentary on the first two books of *Orosius's Histories* thought to have been copied at ninth-century Reims or Soissons (in Vatican City, BAV Reg. lat. 1650).⁹⁰ Though Remigius did not comment on *Orosius*, his teacher Heiric included a quotation from the *Histories* in his so-called *Collectanea*, a scrap-book of historical, theological and moral notabilia.⁹¹ Michael Lapidge has suggested that Asser, who clearly knew the *Histories*, may have encountered it first in Wales, where it can be shown already to have been in circulation.⁹² *Orosius* is another author who was studied attentively at St Gall too; so, just as is the case for the *Consolation*, the picture of how and when annotation to the *Histories* built up begins to look quite complex, and a definitive assessment depends on publication of more of the glosses than are currently accessible.⁹³

There is no doubt that the manuscripts which survive to us contain a substantial body of learning around and between the lines of works which were the object of the closest study, whether monuments of Classical literature or Christian texts. Much of this material, physically at the margins of books, but not necessarily marginal in the minds of those who put it there and used it, has yet to be studied in detail.⁹⁴ The assiduous scholars of the Carolingian period ensured the safe onwards transmission of earlier works that might otherwise

90 Janet Bately, "Those Books That are Most Necessary for All Men to Know: The Classics and Late Ninth-Century England, A Reappraisal," in *The Classics in the Middle Ages*, ed. Aldo S. Bernardo and Saul Levin (Binghamton, NY: 1990), 45–78; on BAV, Reg. Lat. 1650 see O. Szerwiniack, "Un commentaire Hiberno-Latin des deux premiers livres d'Orose, *Histoires contre les païens*," *Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi* 51 (1992–93): 5–137 and 65 (2007): 165–207.

91 Discussed and edited in Riccardo Quadri, *I Collectanea di Eirico di Auxerre* (Fribourg: 1966).

92 "Asser's Reading," in *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences*, ed. Timothy Reuter (Aldershot: 2007), 27–43, at 41–42.

93 The current state of scholarship on glosses for *Orosius* is discussed by H. Eisenhut, *Die Glossen Ekkeharths IV. von St. Gallen im Codex Sangellensis 621*, Monasterium Sancti Galli 4 (St. Gallen: 2009); see also her online edition of the tenth-century annotation by Ekkehart IV, <http://orosius.monumenta.ch>.

94 For the notion that marginalia represent the generation of new learning, see Mariken Teeuwen, "Marginal Scholarship: Rethinking the Function of Latin Glosses in Early Medieval Manuscripts," in *Rethinking and Recontextualizing Glosses: New Perspectives in the Study of Late Anglo-Saxon Glossography*, ed. Patrizia Lendinara, Loredana Lazzari and Claudia Di Sciacca (Porto: 2011), 19–37, at 23–24.

have been lost, but they also forged an intellectual and educational tradition that saw interest and value in those works. Thus at the end of the ninth century and on into the tenth, as learning revived in England, scholars there were able to benefit from learning fostered and developed at centres like Fleury, Auxerre, and St Gall, as well as in Wales.

PART 2

Alfred as Author



Alfred as Author and Translator

Janet M. Bately

In the second part of a circular letter to be attached to copies of the text intended for transmission to named individuals, including amongst others Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, and bishops Heahstan of London, Wulfsig of Sherborne, and Wærferth of Worcester,¹ King Alfred calls on its recipients to play their part in what he sees as an urgently needed revival of learning in England. As a contribution to this revival, he argues—with considerable tact—for the rendering of certain books from Latin into English, citing as precedent the Bible translations from the Hebrew that had been undertaken by Greeks, Romans and “all other Christian nations”:

Forðy me ðyncð betere, gif iow swæ ðyncð, ðæt we eac sumæ bec, ða ðe niedbeðearfosta sien eallum monnum to wiotonne, ðæt we ða on ðæt geðiode wenden ðe we ealle gecnawan mægen.²

He himself, he says, has already made a contribution, by first studying, and then rendering into English, that book which is named in Latin *Pastoralis*, and in English *Hierdeboc*, “Shepherd’s Book,” that is to say the *Regula*, or *Cura, Pastoralis* of Pope Gregory the Great.³

How far this call for translation may have been heeded, we can do no more than conjecture. The only manuscripts containing Old English “literary” texts to have survived from the last part of the ninth century are two copies of Alfred’s *Hierdeboc* (today referred to as the *Pastoral Care*), and a fragment of an

¹ For this letter, or preface, see further Chapters 5 and 6 in this volume.

² *King Alfred’s West-Saxon Version of Gregory’s Pastoral Care*, ed. Henry Sweet, 2 vols, EETS 45 and 50 (London: 1871), repr. 1958, with corrections and additions by N.R.K[er] 7. 6–8: “Therefore it seems better to me, if it seems so to you [plural, referring presumably to all the recipients of Alfred’s letter], that we also should turn certain books—those that are most necessary for all people to know—into that language that we can all understand.” To facilitate comparison between Latin and Old English passages, I have aimed at producing close rather than polished translations. References to OE texts other than the *Boethius* (*Bo*) are to page and line, as, here, for *Pastoral Care* (*PC*). Editors’ emendations are normally silently included.

³ *PC* 7.18–19.

anonymous Old English *Martyrology*, while a second *Martyrology* fragment is in a hand of the end of the ninth or the beginning of the tenth century.⁴ However, from the first part of the tenth century, we also have copies of translations of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* and Paulus Orosius's *Historiarum adversus Paganos Libri Septem*, both attributed to King Alfred by later medieval sources, while a collection of the laws of Alfred, introduced by prefatory material containing translations from the Bible and a first-person statement by the king, has survived in several copies, the oldest witness being datable to the mid-tenth century.⁵ Also from the mid-tenth century is a version in prose and verse of an Old English translation of Boethius, *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, in a fire-damaged manuscript which once had a third-person preface naming Alfred as translator of this book, though this is now only preserved in an all-prose version of the work that "may have been written at the end of the eleventh century or in the very early twelfth century."⁶ Now surviving only in a mid-eleventh-century manuscript, though with extracts from its Introductions found also in marginalia datable to that century, is a prose version of the first fifty Psalms—plausibly the translation which the early twelfth-century historian, William of Malmesbury, was to claim the king left unfinished at the time of his death, while two of three eleventh-century copies of all or part of a translation of Gregory the Great's *Dialogi* have a prose preface in Alfred's name, in which the king states that he commissioned the work from his friends, for his personal use.⁷ Lastly, a twelfth-century manuscript of the

4 As also the opening sections of MS A of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, with some of its material drawn from Latin sources.

5 See below, Chapters 13, 11 and 10. For details of these and later manuscript copies, see Ker, *Catalogue*. For a mid-tenth-century collection of medical recipes containing material which, it is suggested, "brings that work in its original form of Books I and II very closely into relation with Alfred or at any rate his reign and perhaps even with his circle," see *Bald's Leechbook* (*British Museum Royal MS 12 D.xvii*), ed. C.E. Wright, with an appendix by Randolph Quirk, EEMF 5 (Copenhagen: 1955), 18.

6 *The Old English Boethius, An Edition of the Old English Versions of Boethius's De Consolatione Philosophiae*, ed. Malcolm Godden and Susan Irvine, with a chapter on the Metres by Mark Griffith and contributions by Rohini Jayatilaka, 2 vols (Oxford: 2009), vol. 1, 13; Ker, *Catalogue*, item 305 ("s.xii").

7 For part of a late tenth-century copy, see David Yerkes, "The Text of the Canterbury Fragment of Werferth's Translation of Gregory's Dialogues and Its Relation to the Other Manuscripts," *ASE* 6 (1977): 121–135, and for the verse preface in the third MS, see Chapter 5. For lists of all the MSS see, e.g., Ker, *Catalogue*, xv–xix, and Helmut Gneuss, *Handlist of Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100*, *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 241 (Tempe, AZ: 2001).

Old English *Soliloquies*, the opening of whose first-person preface has apparently been lost, has an *explicit* referring to Alfred as its author.

In recent times, however, scholars have become increasingly sceptical about alleged connections between these works and King Alfred's educational initiative, and in particular about their right to membership of what has come to be known as the "Alfredian canon," works in which King Alfred himself had a hand.⁸ Cockayne's view that the "Book of Martyrs" that he was editing was "of þe age of Ælfred" and "not only of Ælfred's time, but formed also under his direction," was only a year later to be challenged by Herzfeld, who argued for a date of composition nearer to 850 than the end of the century.⁹ Doubts already being expressed at the end of the nineteenth century¹⁰ concerning the correctness of the attribution of the Old English *Bede* to Alfred, have since been confirmed by a number of detailed linguistic investigations. No actual evidence for direct involvement by the king in the compilation of the Chronicle has been discovered, and questions raised initially by Josef Raith in 1951 have led to the Old English *Orosius* also being removed from the canon.¹¹ Alfred's responsibility for turning into Old English verse the original prose rendering of Boethius's *metra* was being queried already in the nineteenth century, and, most recently, Malcolm Godden and Susan Irvine have given their new edition the title "*The Old English Boethius*," not, as hitherto, "Alfred's *Boethius*," with the prose version described as "the work of an unknown writer of substantial learning, not necessarily connected with King Alfred or his court, but working some time in

8 For an invaluable annotated bibliography to 1996, with forty-eight page Introduction, see Greg Waite, *Old English Prose Translations of King Alfred's Reign*, Annotated Bibliographies of Old and Middle English Literature, 6 (Cambridge: 2000). For brief overviews of the subject, see Bately, "The Alfredian Canon Revisited: One Hundred Years On," *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences*, ed. Timothy Reuter (Aldershot: 2003), 107–120, and Rohini Jayatilaka, "King Alfred and his Circle," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 1, c.400–1100 (Cambridge: 2012), 670–678.

9 Thomas O. Cockayne, *The Shrine: A Collection of Occasional Papers on Dry Subjects* (London: 1864–1870), 6, 29–35 at 33, and 8, 44–158 at 45 and 157; *An Old English Martyrology*, ed. George Herzfeld, EETS OS 116 (London: 1900), xxxii and xxxv; Christine Rauer, "The Sources of the *OE Martyrology*," *ASE* 32 (2003): 89–109, at 90–92; and Rauer's "Usage of the Old English Martyrology," *Foundations of Learning: The Transfer of Encyclopaedic Knowledge in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Rolf H. Bremmer, Jr., and Kees Dekker, Mediaevalia Groningana, n.s. 9 (Paris: 2007), 125–146.

10 *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. Thomas Miller, EETS OS 95, 96, 110, 111 (London: 1890–1898), especially vol. 1, lvi–lviii.

11 Though this does not of course rule out a date of composition in Alfred's reign. See further below, Chapter 11.

the period 890 to about 930, probably in southern England.”¹² Even the king’s involvement in the translation of the *Pastoral Care* has not escaped challenge, although all the evidence indicates that that work was already in circulation in the king’s name by the year 896.¹³ So, for example, Simeon Potter argues that while “in syntax and vocabulary [this work] stands apart from [the *Bede*] and [*Dialogues*],...in style of translation it stands apart from [the *Orosius*, *Boethius*], and [*Soliloquies*],” texts in which he sees “a steady progress in Alfred’s mind and art; in classical scholarship, in command of language, and in originality of thought.”¹⁴ “It is impossible,” he claims, “to think for a moment that this accurate, scholarly, painstaking work was done by the man who wrote these last-named texts.”¹⁵ Finally, Alfred’s ability to undertake the rendering into English of any of the texts has been questioned.¹⁶

Alfred as Translator

Doubts about the king’s qualifications as translator have been to a large extent prompted by statements in a *Life of Alfred*, by the Welsh bishop, Asser, and in particular by a passage in that work referring to an event on St Martin’s Day, November 887. This was when, according to Alfred’s biographer, the king first began to read and translate at the same time:

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- 12 See, e.g., Alfred Leicht, *Ist König Ælfred der Verfasser der Alliterienden Metra des Boethius?* (Halle: 1882), repr. *Anglia* 6 (1883); and *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 1, 146. See also *ibid.*, 145, “If the attribution to King Alfred is correct, the translation was probably the work of his last years, from 894–899.”
 - 13 For a review of the dating of the composition and circulation of the *Pastoral Care*, see now Bately, “The Dating of Old English Prose: Some Problems and Pitfalls, with Special Reference to the Alfredian Canon,” *The Kemble Lectures on Anglo-Saxon Studies, 2009–12*, ed. Alice Jorgensen, Helen Conrad-O’Brian and John Scattergood (Trinity College, Dublin: forthcoming 2014).
 - 14 Simeon Potter, “On the Relation of the Old English Bede to Werferth’s Gregory and to Alfred’s Translations,” *Věstník královské české společnosti nauk, Třída filosoficko-historicko-jazykozpytná* (Prague: 1930), 1–76, at 52 and 71.
 - 15 Potter, “Relation,” 52; and see also 73 (on *OEHE* and *PC*), “Alfred did what he could but the words of the finished MSS. were not written or dictated by him.”
 - 16 See, e.g., Godden’s publications on Alfredian authorship, in particular, “Did King Alfred Write Anything?,” *Medium Ævum* 76 (2007): 1–23, “The Alfredian Project and its Aftermath: Rethinking the Literary History of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries,” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 162 (2009): 93–122; and “Prologues and Epilogues in the Old English Pastoral Care, and their Carolingian Models,” *JEGP* 110 (2011): 441–473.

Eodem quoque anno saepe memoratus Ælfred, Angulsaxonum rex, divino instinctu legere et interpretari simul uno eodemque die primitus inchoavit.¹⁷

Since *legere*, “to read,” here is generally taken specifically to apply to the reading of Latin, it has been argued that Asser is referring to an Alfred who did not learn Latin himself until he was thirty-nine years old.¹⁸ However, Asser reports that certain Mercian scholars in Alfred’s entourage were reading aloud to him from books even before he himself, along with other foreign scholars recruited by the king, arrived in Wessex, and there is nothing to suggest that Alfred did not already have a good working knowledge of spoken Latin (the international language of the time), enabling him to discuss these texts with foreigners as well as countrymen.¹⁹

In this context, it would not be surprising, therefore, if one day Alfred had suddenly decided to read and translate Latin passages for himself,²⁰ and I would argue that there is no good reason to use Asser’s *Life* on its own to reject Alfred’s claim, that having studied Gregory’s *Regula Pastoralis* with his learned scholars, he subsequently turned it into English.

Of course, just as present-day rulers have their speech writers, drafters, secretaries and advisory committees, so King Alfred is surely highly unlikely to have been personally responsible for each and every detail of the wording of official documents such as charters, his law code, or even perhaps his will.²¹

17 Asser’s *Life of King Alfred, together with the Annals of Saint Neots Erroneously Ascribed to Asser*, ed. William Henry Stevenson (Oxford: 1904), new impression with an introduction by Dorothy Whitelock (Oxford: 1959), Chapter 87, “It was also in this year that Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, first began through divine inspiration to read [Latin] and to translate at the same time, all on one and the same day” (trans. from K&L, 99). See also Chapter 89, “legere et in Saxonica lingua interpretari,” “read and translate into the Saxon language,” and K&L, 28 and 239, n. 46.

18 Malcolm Godden, “Did King Alfred Write Anything,” 2, and idem, “Alfredian Project,” 101.

19 See, e.g., Asser, *Life*, Chapters 77, 78, 81, and also 76 and 88; Bately, “Dating,” forthcoming.

20 Asser, *Life*, Chapters 76–77, 81 and 88. For possible bias in Asser’s account, see Bately, “Dating.”

21 These official documents are accordingly not included in the discussion of the members of the “Alfredian canon” that follows. For Alfred’s lawcode as “a collection sponsored if not actually written by the king,” see Allen J. Frantzen, *King Alfred*, Twayne’s English Authors Series 425 (Boston: 1986), 11. For my own reservations, see Bately, “King Alfred and the OE Translation of Orosius,” *Anglia* 88 (1970): 433–460, at 452–453; and for Patrick Wormald’s reply, his *Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century* vol. 1 (Oxford: 1999), 271–277. I agree with most of the points made in Wormald’s excellent analysis, but not in all the details.

Indeed the rather formal prose preface to the Old English version of Gregory's *Dialogues*, beginning "I Alfred" and thanking his *getreowum freondum* ("faithful friends") for translating the work for him, has features that are now accepted as pointing to it having been produced in the name of the West-Saxon king, but by an unknown person or persons of Mercian background, on his behalf.²² As for the *Pastoral Care*, although in this case the dialect of both the preface and the body of the text is that of early West-Saxon, linguistic study on its own cannot provide us with the name of its author. However, whether or not we take its attribution to King Alfred at face value, or assume that, like the preface to the *Dialogues*, the prefatory letter is simply in the voice of the king, a detailed analysis of language and style does enable us to attempt to answer the question whether the translator of the *Regula pastoralis* worked alone, and whether he was also responsible for the translation of any or all of the other works with a claim to be members of the Alfredian canon: the *Boethius*, *Soliloquies*, and *Psalms*.²³

22 See *Bischof Wærferth's von Worcester Übersetzung der Dialoge Gregors des Grossen*, ed. Hans Hecht (Leipzig: 1900–7, repr. Darmstadt, 1965), 1. Alfred's "faithful friends" may have included both Wærferth of Worcester (named by Asser, *Life*, Chapter 77, as author of the translation), and the Mercian priest Werwulf: see, e.g., Potter, "Relation," 54–55, and Dorothy Whitelock, "The Prose of Alfred's Reign," *Continuations and Beginnings, Studies in OE Literature*, ed. Eric Gerald Stanley (London: 1966), 67–103, at 67–68. Whitelock goes further: "One suspects that Werferth or one of his clergy had a hand in the composing of Alfred's preface," in "Some Charters in the Name of King Alfred," *Saints, Scholars and Heroes: Studies in Medieval Culture in honour of Charles W. Jones*, ed. Margot H. King and Wesley M. Stevens, 2 vols. (Collegeville, MN: 1979), vol. 1, 77–98, at 90). However, I have found no evidence, linguistic or stylistic, that would support the prioritisation of the claims of the person or persons responsible for either *OEGD* or *OEHE*, or indeed of any other known writer of the period. See further the discussions in Bately, "Alfredian Canon"; Malcolm Godden, "Wærferth and King Alfred: The Fate of the Old English *Dialogues*," *Alfred the Wise: Studies in Honour of Janet Bately on the Occasion of her Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. Jane Roberts and Janet L. Nelson with Malcolm Godden (Cambridge: 1997), 35–51; and now Bately, "Dating."

23 For doubts about Alfred's authorship of the preface to *PC*, see Godden, "Prologues and Epilogues," 442–443. For significant agreements between *Pastoral Care* and *Psalms*, see *King Alfred's Old English Prose Translation of the First Fifty Psalms*, ed. Patrick P. O'Neill, Medieval Academy Books 104 (Cambridge, MA: 2001), 73–96; and for my reply to recent criticisms of O'Neill's arguments, see Bately, "Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything? The Integrity of the Alfredian Canon Revisited," *Medium Ævum* 78 (2009): 189–215, at 192–196, 199–202 and 205. For a close connection between *Boethius* and *Soliloquies*, see most recently the summary in *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 1, 135–136.

Linguistic Evidence

Any attempt at detailed linguistic analysis of the four texts in question is complicated by the presence of numerous scribal variants in those of which more than one manuscript copy has survived, and the need to distinguish those features of a translation which depend on a Latin source from those which represent the writer's own usage. Moreover, if we accept the king's personal involvement, it is impossible to determine whether or not the final wording of a particular text has been influenced by the intervention of a collaborator or colleague invited to comment on work in progress. (One wonders what level of linguistic and stylistic consistency might be revealed by a detailed study of the published speeches or memoirs of, say, a modern president or prime minister.) What arguments then can be put forward for Alfredian authorship of these texts?²⁴

Vocabulary and Syntax²⁵

Over recent years, a growing number of detailed studies have been made of the vocabulary and syntax of Old English texts, concentrating on the distribution patterns of individual words or groups of words, as indicators of date, or dialect, or authorship, and, in the case of early or non-West Saxon texts, on creeping standardisation in the course of their transmission.²⁶ However, what appears sometimes to have been overlooked in discussions of the integrity of

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- 24 For an important study of the possible degrees of involvement in these texts by the king, see David Pratt, "Problems of Authorship and Audience in the Writings of King Alfred the Great," in *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World*, ed. Patrick Wormald and Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge: 2007), 162–191.
 - 25 I confine myself here to the prose texts: for the language of *Bo*, verse metres see *Alfred's Metres of Boethius*, ed. Bill Griffiths (Pinner, Middlesex: 1991, revised edition 1994); and Mark Griffith, "Diction of the Versifier," in *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. I. 191–194. For the *domboc* as a special case, see Wormald, *Making*, 273–274.
 - 26 For manuscript revisions, see, e.g., Dorothy M. Horgan, "The Relationship between the O.E. MSS of King Alfred's Translation of Gregory's *Pastoral Care*," *Anglia* 91 (1973): 153–169; Raymond J.S. Grant, *The B Text of the OE Bede: A Linguistic Commentary*, Costerus NS 73 (Amsterdam: 1989); David Yerkes, *The Two Versions of Waerferth's Translation of Gregory's Dialogues: An OE Thesaurus*, Toronto Old English Series 4 (Toronto: 1979); Carolin Schreiber, *King Alfred's Old English Translation of Pope Gregory the Great's Regula Pastoralis and its Cultural Context: A Study and Partial Edition According to All Surviving Manuscripts Based on Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 12* (Frankfurt am Main: 2003).

the Alfredian canon is the fact that paragraph by paragraph, section by section, what we are analysing is a top layer, that has, as it were, been superimposed on material previously assembled, in another language, by other writers, and necessarily reflecting the latter's choices, not the translator's.²⁷ Even though the degrees of closeness to the work undergoing translation may vary, and the Old English version may include passages of independent composition, the nature of the vocabulary employed, the choice and distribution patterns of certain syntactical features, and indeed the overall character of each of the translations, will essentially have been predetermined, whether by Pope Gregory, or by Boethius, or by Saint Augustine, or by the usage of the Romanum Psalter.

For instance, the varying demands of the Latin sources have contributed to the syntactical differences that have been noted—in particular the OE *Boethius's* preference for conjunction and adverb *þa...þa* ("when...then") in sentence-opening temporal clauses, in correlation with adverb *þa* in the following main clause.²⁸ All but a handful of the instances of this construction in that text function as dialogue-markers, and are usually variations on the quasi-formulaic "*Ða se wisdom þa ðis spell asæd hæfde, þa ongan he giddigan and þus singende cwæð*" ("*When Wisdom then had spoken this speech, then he began to sing, and singing said as follows*"), and "*Ða se wisdom þa ðis leoð asungen hæfde, þa ongan he eft spellian and ðus cwæð*" ("*When Wisdom then had sung this song, then he began to speak again and said as follows*"), used to mark a change from prose to verse or verse to prose, where the *De Consolatione* has either a link such as *inquit* ("[he/she] said"), or *sic coepit*, ("[he/she] began thus"), or no speech- or verse-introducer at all.²⁹ In such a text-specific context, Elizabeth Liggins's figures of *Boethius* 59, *Pastoral Care* 1, *Soliloquies* 0 (even with the addition of three instances in Alfred's prefatory letter to the *Pastoral Care*), cease to have any special significance in terms of authorship.³⁰

27 For a somewhat similar image, though this time with specific reference to "multiple levels of fictive *personae*," see Pratt's reference to a nest of Russian dolls, "Problems," 173.

28 See Bruce Mitchell, *Old English Syntax*, 2 vols. (Oxford: 1985), II. §2576.

29 *Bo* 21.1–2 and 26.1–2. Readings taken from the B text. Exceptions include three clusters in narrative passages: the stories of "Liberius" biting out his tongue and Regulus's treatment of prisoners (*Bo* 16. 64–67 and 81–82); Seneca facing death (*Bo* 29. 48–50 and 51–52); and Orpheus seeking to win back Eurydice (*Bo* 35. 213–214, 216–217, and 237–239). See also commentary on these passages, *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 2.

30 Elizabeth M. Liggins, "The Authorship of the Old English Orosius," *Anglia* 88 (1970): 289–322, at 292. Liggins, however, interprets the construction "*þa...þa*" as two parts of a divided conjunction.

Similarly, differences between these four Old English texts in the proportions of use of individual lexical items, such as the words for “God” and “Lord,” “rejoicing,” and “answering,” which, it has been suggested, point to different authors at work, cease to be of importance, when set in the context of the distribution patterns of their Latin equivalents within the texts which they are translating, the subject matter, and their very different lengths.³¹

As for Simeon Potter’s list of lexical items that make the vocabulary of the *Pastoral Care* “unlike that of any other Old English text,” here it is not normally a matter of choice between synonyms, though occasionally the selection of alternative interpretations of a Latin term is involved.³² Alongside *Pastoral Care*’s choice of *hapax legomenon gecafstrian* for Latin *frenare* (“to bridle”), for instance, we find instances in not just this text but also *Boethius* and *Soliloquies* of (*ge*)*bridlian* (“to use a bridle”), used to translate that same Latin verb, while the otherwise unrecorded *ungefynde* is one of a pair of words rendering Latin *sterilis* (“infertile, barren”), in a sentence in which *unwæsðmbære* is used to describe the field in which this sterile grain is grown, contrasting it with that which *godne wæsðm bringð*:

Pastoral Care 411.16–20: Hwæt, we witon ðæt we ma lufiað ðone æcer ðe ær wæs mid ðornum aswogen, & æfterðæmðe ða ðornas beoð aheawene, & se æker bið onered, bringð *godne wæsðm* ma we lufiað ðone ðonne ðone ðe stent on clænum lande, & bið *unwæsðmbære*, oððe *ungefynde* corn bringð oððe *deaf*.³³

- 31 See Michael Treschow, Paramjit S. Gill, and Tim B. Swartz, “King Alfred’s Scholarly Writings and the Authorship of the First Fifty Prose Psalms,” *Heroic Age* 12 (2009), <http://www.heroicage.org/issues/12/treschowgillswartz.php>, §34; and Godden, “Did King Alfred Write Anything?,” 10–11. For my interpretation see Bately, “Lexical Evidence for the Authorship of the Prose Psalms in the Paris Psalter,” *ASE* 10 (1982): 69–95, at 82–86, and, “Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything?,” 196–199, 200–202, 202–203.
- 32 See Potter, “Relation,” 49. Not all Potter’s examples, however, are *hapax legomena* (see, e.g., Bately, “Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything?,” 211, n. 27). For possible synonyms, see Jane Roberts and Christian Kay with Lynne Grundy, *A Thesaurus of Old English*, 2 vols (London: 1995).
- 33 “Lo, we know that we love more the field that was previously choked with thorns, and after the thorns have been cut down and the field has been ploughed, brings a good crop—we love that more than the one that stands in clean land and is unfruitful or produces undeveloped[?] or barren grain.” cf. *Bo* 34.260 (of deserts) *barum sondum*, *DCP steriles harenae*, and for the various senses of *deaf* see *DOE* and *OED deaf*. For *DCP*, see *Anicii Manlii Severini Boethii Philosophiae Consolatio*, ed. Ludwig Bieler, CCSL 94 (Turnhout: 1957).

Regula Pastoralis III.xxviii.137–39: Plus namque terram diligimus quae post spinas exarata fructus uberes producit, quam quae nullas spinas habuit, sed tamen exculta *sterilem* segetem gignit.³⁴

Rather, it is a matter of the Latin behind the *Pastoral Care*, but not the other three texts, requiring translation of words such as *eunuchus*, *mamma*, *hydrocele*, *seminiverbius* (“word-sowing, babbling”) and *multiloquio vacantes* (“[those] idle with much talking”), for which we find *afyrd*, *delu*, *heala*, *word-sawere* (“word-sower”), and *felaiddelspræce* (“[those] talking very idly”), while *unforwandodlice* (“unhesitatingly”) and *forgiemeleasian* (“to neglect, disregard, ignore”), with their *un-* and *for-* prefixes, noted by Potter as unusual, are examples of types of words, which—along with prefixes *efen-/emn-*, *fore-*, and *full-*—have been rightly described by the work’s recent editors as “disproportionately frequent in [the *Boethius*],” but are no less favoured by other members of the Alfredian corpus.³⁵

Linguistic Variation

At the same time, other variations of usage have other possible explanations. So, for instance, as O’Neill has demonstrated, differences in lexical choice between the shared Psalter translations in *Psalms* and *Pastoral Care* may be accounted for as “the work of a single author adjusting his translation to different sources and contexts.”³⁶ A similar explanation can be given for the different handling of the motif of the proverbial sow in the *Pastoral Care* and *Boethius*.³⁷ The passage in the former follows closely the Latin of the *Regula Pastoralis* and its comment on 2 Peter 2.22, observing how some men behave like swine and roll in muddy water.³⁸ In the *Boethius*, in contrast, an expansion of a brief reference to pigs in a list of people that resemble animals compares some men

34 “For we love that land better which, having been ploughed up after thorns, produces plentiful fruits, than the one that had no thorns, but nevertheless, having been cultivated, yields a barren harvest.” For *RP*, see Grégoire le Grand, *Règle Pastorale*, ed. Bruno Judic, Charles Morel, Floribert Rommel, 2 vols., *Sources Chrétiennes* 381, 382 (Paris: 1992).

35 See Potter, “Relation,” 49, *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 1, 190 and further below, 127. The verb *forgiemeleasian* is reported by the *DOE* as in fact occurring ca. eighty times.

36 *Prose Psalms*, ed. O’Neill, 78–95, at 83 and *ibid.*, 50–51. For the avoidance of repetition, see also Nicole Guenther Discenza, “Alfred the Great and the Anonymous Prose Proem to the *Boethius*,” *JEGP* 107 (2008): 57–76, at 65–70.

37 See further Bately, “Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything?,” 206–208.

38 *PC* 419.27–28, *RP* 3.30.17–22.

to swine, which have to be forced to wash in clean water.³⁹ In this passage, the presence of no fewer than three otherwise unrecorded compounds is easily explained as part of the author's decision to use an expanded simile, exploiting rhythms and sound patterns, in particular alliteration, with the hapax legomenon *aswylīan* ("to wash oneself") picking up the initial *sw* of *swin* and anticipating the *sw* of a second hapax legomenon *beswemman* ("to make swim, wash"), which shares its prefix *be-* with the third hapax legomenon, *bewealwīan* ("to roll oneself, to wallow"), which in its turn picks up on earlier instances of initial *w*.

Boethius 37.113–16: [H]e bið anlicost fettum swinum þe simle willað licgan on fulum solum, and hi nyllað aswyligan on hluttrum wæterum; ac þeah hi seldum hwonne beswemde weorðon, þonne sleað hi eft on þa solu and bewealwiað þæron.⁴⁰

Other variations, however, may well be explained as due to changes in the conditions under which translation took place, including, in particular, the possibly quite lengthy intervals which may have occurred between sessions. Such breaks provide a likely (if impossible to prove) explanation for certain shifts in usage within the individual texts, including clustering of forms, as, for instance, the distribution of words for "answering," mentioned above. In this case, the six instances of *(ge)andwyrðan* and four of *(ge)andswarian* in the body of the text of the *Pastoral Care* (following a single instance in the prose preface) are widely spaced, each with a group of three entries,⁴¹ followed in Chapter 58 by a combined group, consisting of a single instance of *andswarian* and three more of *(ge)andwyrðan*. In the *Boethius*, with thirty-four instances of *andswarian* and seventeen of *(ge)andwyrðan*, thirteen of the instances of the latter are concentrated in Chapters 5 to 8, the remaining four singletons in Chapters 3, 22, 33 and 41. Moreover, although "inconsistencies in lexical usage" have led the editors of

39 DCP 4p3: "Sordidae suis voluptate detinetur" (trans. Tester, in *Boethius: The Theological Tractates, The Consolation of Philosophy*, ed. H.F. Stewart, E.K. Rand, and S.J. Tester [London: 1973], "he is gripped by the pleasure of a filthy sow"; trans. V.E. Watts, *Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy* [Harmondsworth: 1969], 125, "is occupied by the filthy pleasures of a sow").

40 "He is most like fat swine which always want to lie in foul sloughs, and they will not wash themselves in pure waters; but even if they are occasionally washed, then they cast themselves again into the sloughs and wallow in them."

41 With *(ge)andwyrðan* in *PC* Chapters 4, 10 and 28, and *(ge)andswarian* in Chapters 41(2x) and 50 respectively. See Batley, "Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything," 202–203.

the *Boethius* to see the case for a common authorial mind behind the four works of the canon as “far from conclusive,” some at least could well be no more than instances of an author’s changing vocabulary.⁴²

Variation in conditions may similarly account for the greater specificity of the identifications of the sources of biblical quotations in the final chapters of the *Pastoral Care*, and the use variously of the names *se wisa* and *mod*, and either *Boethius* or *he* and *ic* (“I”), for the two participants in the dialogue of the *Boethius*.⁴³ Perhaps such was the case also with the description of the “wise” Solomon as both *se wisa* and *se snotra*, with *se wisa* clustered in the *Pastoral Care*, Chapters 35 to 38.⁴⁴ Some scholars have seen this particular variation as the result of multiple authorship, with either considerable assistance from the advisers named by the king in his letter circulated with the *Pastoral Care*, or a complete change of translator.⁴⁵ However, as Schreiber has observed, “if such variation can be attributed to the king’s helpers, there is otherwise little evidence for their influence on the vocabulary of the [*Pastoral Care*],” while for Godden and Irvine, “the somewhat inconsistent manner” in which the change from *Mod* to *ic* or *Boethius* takes place in the *Boethius* is “perhaps easier to explain as a change of practice by a single author.”⁴⁶ Even easier still, of course, if the single author is a king. Little chance for a ruler, preoccupied with the “various and manifold affairs” of his kingdom, to enjoy the unbroken period or periods of concentration that a scholar might expect, working in the quiet of a monastery.⁴⁷ Instead, the king may have just snatched an opportunity to relax with his books, and, having perhaps discussed their content with whoever chanced to be in his entourage at the time, he then dictated his interpretation. He might complete perhaps no more than a page or two at a sitting and possibly only slowly developed an individual prose style of his own.⁴⁸

42 *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, I, 194, quoting Bately, “King Alfred and the Old English Translation of *Orosius*,” 457 on occasional forms in *PC* typical of the Old English *Orosius*. However, similar variation is found also in the works of Ælfric, for which see Godden, “Ælfric’s Changing Vocabulary,” *ES* 61 (1980): 206–223. See further, Bately, “Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything?,” 196–204.

43 See further the discussion, by Disenza, Chapter 7, below.

44 For the possible dialect connections of *snotor* and *snytro* (“wise” and “wisdom”), see further below, 127.

45 See comments by Schreiber, *King Alfred’s OE Translation*, 48.

46 Schreiber, *King Alfred’s OE Translation*, 48; *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 1, 145.

47 *PC* 7. 17–18; *OEGD* 1.19–21 (explaining that the translation was commissioned so that the king might in the midst of these earthly tribulations sometimes consider heavenly matters).

48 See, e.g., Bately, “King Alfred and the OE Translation of *Orosius*,” 458.

Linguistic Agreements

The linguistic features that have been put forward as evidence against common authorship of the *Pastoral Care* and *Boethius* are not then in themselves significant. Conversely, there is plenty of material that links the two works, in addition to that evidence which has allowed us to discount Alfredian authorship of the *Bede*, *Orosius*, and even the preface in the king's name to the translation of Gregory's *Dialogues*.⁴⁹

Moreover, thanks to the help of the three very important new research aids, the *Toronto Corpus*, the *Thesaurus of Old English*, and the (ongoing) *Dictionary of Old English*, it is now possible to identify a number of items of vocabulary which support the case for a close connection between the members of the Alfredian canon, because they are either exclusive to, or found mainly in, two or more members of what might be called the larger Alfredian corpus. So, for example, instances of *cræft* in the sense "virtue" are confined to the four translations ascribed to Alfred.⁵⁰ *Andefen* ("measure, amount, capacity," etc.), recorded only fifteen times in all, occurs six times in the *Pastoral Care*, three times in the *Soliloquies*, twice in the *Boethius*, and once in the *Psalms*.⁵¹ (There is also a single occurrence in the Ohthere and Wulfstan interpolation in the *Orosius*.) The compound adjective *ælenge* ("lengthy, tedious") is confined to the *Pastoral Care*, *Boethius* and *Soliloquies*, with noun *ælinge* ("tedium") only in the *Boethius*'s metrical preface (MS C), while of the *DOE*'s seven instances of *domere* ("judge"), two are in each of the *Pastoral Care* and *Boethius*, one in the *Psalms*, one in the introductory material to Alfred's *Laws*.⁵² *Astyfician*, "to uproot," is recorded only four times in Old English texts, three of them once again in the *Pastoral Care*, *Boethius*, and *Soliloquies*, in each case exploiting the language of gardening.⁵³

49 See above, 115 and 118, n. 22. For features distinctive of late OE but absent from *PC* and other early OE texts, see, e.g., Schreiber, *King Alfred's OE Translation*, 123–124.

50 Nicole Guenther Disenza, "Power, Skill and Virtue in the Old English *Boethius*," *ASE* 26 (1997): 81–108.

51 *DOE* *andefn*, 16x, apparently including a MS variant.

52 For *ælenge*, see also see Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe, "Listening to the Scenes of Reading: King Alfred's Talking Prefaces," in *Orality and Literacy in the Middle Ages: Essays on a Conjunction and Its Consequences in Honour of D.H. Green*, ed. Mark Chinca and Christopher Young, Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy (Turnhout: 2005), 17–36, esp. 31–32. For *domere*, see Bately, "Alfredian Canon," 112. For alternatives in other texts see Roberts and Kay, *OE Thesaurus*, 08.01.03.07.01 and 14.03.02.

53 The simplex *styfician* is recorded in *DOE* as occurring only once, and, like the fourth instance of *astyfician*, in a gloss.

Thus, in the *Pastoral Care*, closely following the *Regula Pastoralis*, Alfred calls for certain sinners, who pretend that they wish to “root out” (*astyfecian*, *Regula Pastoralis eradicare*) evil in themselves, not then to dare “sow” (*sæwan*, *Regula Pastoralis seminare*) it in other men.

Pastoral Care 427.17–19: Forðy hi sint to manienne, ðonne hi licettað ðæt hi willen astyfecian ðæt yfel on him selfum, ðæt hi hit ðonne ne dyrren sæwan on oðrum monnum...⁵⁴

Regula Pastoralis III.xxxi:11–13: Ammonendi ergo sunt, ut si eradicare mala dissimulant, saltem seminare pertimescant.⁵⁵

The *Boethius* was offered by the *De Consolatione* a pair of images—that of “implanting” (*De Consolatione inserere*, *Boethius plantian*) virtues in the minds of the powerful, balanced by a reference to vices being “driven away” (*De Consolatione depellere*). It discards the second and strengthens the first, introducing not just one but two verbs of “uprooting,” *astyfician* and *wyrtwalian*:

Bo 27.6–10: Hwæðer nu se anweald hæbbe þone þeaw þæt he astyfecige unðeawas and wyrtwalige of ricra manna mode and plantige þær cræftas on? Ic wat þeah þæt se eorðlica anweald næfre ne sæwð þa cræftas ac lisð and gadrað unðeawas; and þonne hi gegadrad hæfð þonne eowað he hi nallas ne hild.⁵⁶

Finally, the *Soliloquies* agrees with the *Boethius* in pairing the terms *astyfician* and *wyrtwalian* and follows them up with the verb “to grow”—

Soliloquies 38.10–13: Ac ic wolde witan hwæðer sio þin ealde gytsung and seo gemæhð eallunga of ðinum mode astyfcod were and wyrtwalod, þæt heo gyt growan ne myhte.

54 “Therefore they are to be admonished when they pretend that they wish to root out that evil in themselves, that they then dare not sow it in other men.”

55 “They are therefore to be admonished, that if they pretend to eradicate evils, they should at least fear to sow them.”

56 “Does power now have the habit that it can uproot and eradicate (MS B *wyrtwalige*, MS C *awyrtwalie*) vices from the minds of powerful men and plant virtues therein? I know however that earthly power never sows virtues but picks and gathers vices, and when it has gathered them, then it shows them, by no means conceals them.” For a gloss *inplantent* (MSS group X) to *DCP* 3p4.1 *inserant*, see *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 2, 348. For material here from MS C only, see *ibid.*, vol. 2, 212.

—in this case without any prompting from the Latin, Augustine's image being the medical one of cutting away putrefaction.⁵⁷

As for the “disproportionate” use of certain prefixes noted in the *Boethius*, this too is a feature of other members of the Alfredian canon and the *Pastoral Care* in particular, with, for instance, thirteen different compounds in *efen-/emn-* (“even”) found in *Pastoral Care* and *Boethius* (prose), of which five are recorded by the *DOE* as occurring only in one or both of these two texts, or in *Boethius* prose and verse, with two more found only twice, in each case with the *Pastoral Care* as one of the two.⁵⁸

At the same time, studies have revealed that although their language is basically West-Saxon, members of the corpus share a number of lexical items that scholars otherwise regard as typical of Anglian dialects—possibly, it has been suggested, thanks to Alfred's family connections, or other Mercian contacts (including of course the king's “helpers”), possibly because these items were still common Old English at the end of the ninth century.⁵⁹ Of these the *Boethius* agrees with the *Pastoral Care* in its use of *forðryccan* (“to press, crush”), and *frignan* (“to ask”),⁶⁰ with the *Pastoral Care* and *Soliloquies* in its use of *carcern* (“prison”), and with *Pastoral Care* in its use of *feoung* (“hatred, hostility”). It also uses *snytro*, “wisdom,” twice, a form found also in the *Pastoral Care*'s verse preface (alongside its normal term *wisdom*), while all four texts employ forms of (*ge*)*gyrwan*.

Syntactical constructions characteristic of the texts of the Alfredian canon, being either recorded solely, or mainly used, there, are *swiðe hraðe þæs ðe* (“very shortly after,” *Boethius* and *Psalms* only), [*hit*] *is cynn* [*ðæt*] (“[it] is

57 “But I would like to know whether that your old covetousness and greed has been completely uprooted and eradicated from your mind, so that it cannot still grow.” (cf. Augustine, *Soliloquiorum Libri Duo*, ed. Wolfgangus Hörmann [Vienna, 1986], I.§18, “omniumque illorum quae resecta credimus tabem manere”). See also *König Alfreds des Grossen Bearbeitung der Soliloquien des Augustinus*, ed. W. Endter, Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa 11 (Hamburg: 1922), 39.14–40.2, with *awyrtwalode*, *wyrtruman* and also *aspretan* (“sprout forth,”) and *Psalms* 36:9. (9) *awyrtwalode of eorþan; exterminabuntur* in *Le Psautier Romain et les autres anciens psautiers latins*, ed. Robert Weber, Collectanea Biblica Latina 10 (Rome: 1953).

58 With five further words in *Bo Met* not in *PC* or *Bo*. In *DOE* forms with and without *ge*-are given separate entries.

59 See Mechthild Gretsch, “The Junius Psalter Gloss: Its Historical and Cultural Context,” *ASE* 29 (2000): 85–121, at 98–106; and, for these items in *PC*, *Bo* and *Psalms* respectively, Schreiber, *King Alfred's OE Translation*, 123; *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 1, 193; and *Prose Psalms*, ed. O'Neill, 68–69.

60 *Fri(g)nan* is also found in *Orosius*.

fitting/proper [that],” *Pastoral Care* seven times, *Boethius* three times, *Psalms* twice, out of a total of twenty occurrences), *oðer tweg[r]a oððe...oððe* (“one of the two,” “either...or...,” *Boethius* twelve times, *Psalms*, *Pastoral Care* and *Soliloquies* each once out of a total of seventeen instances), and *swa...swa...swæðer...* (“whether...or...whichever,” *Pastoral Care* and *Soliloquies* each three times, *Boethius* six).⁶¹

Combinations of demonstrative and possessive, as in the *Boethius*, *se eower hlisa* (“this your fame”), and *Pastoral Care*, *ðin sio winestre hond* (“thine the left hand”), are also to be found in all four texts, though not confined to them.⁶² However, Latin-influenced constructions such as *foregesettum þæm swiðe halgum godspellum* (“[with] the most holy gospels set out before [us]”) and *betynedum his eagum* (“[with] his eyes having been closed”), of common occurrence in the *Bede* and *Dialogues*, are not a feature of our four texts.⁶³

The Handling of the Source Texts

There are, of course, major differences in subject matter and approach between the Latin texts selected for translation. The *Regula Pastoralis*, for instance, is a manual, methodically giving instruction to the clergy as to how they must lead their lives, and laying down the ways in which they should advise and instruct their flocks. It has been unkindly, and somewhat unfairly, described as a “dreary tract in Latin turned into a dreary tract in English.”⁶⁴ In contrast, the *De*

61 As, e.g., *swa good swa yfel, swæðer he deð*, “whether good or evil, whichever he does.” Of the six instances of the idiom in *Bo*, two read *swæðer swa*, with the second in MS C only, MS B reading merely *swa*. For *swiðe hraðe þæs þe* see *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 1, 204: “Some of the prose syntax is distinctive of that used in other ‘Alfredian’ texts, particularly of that found in the OE Soliloquies and OE Pastoral Care. Rare usages (such as *swiðe hraðe þæs þe*, attested elsewhere only in the OE Prose Psalms) may be significant in relation to authorship.”

62 See Mitchell, *OE Syntax*, vol. 1, §§103–112.

63 *OEHE* 310.22–23 (*HE* IV.17(15), 384, *praepositis sacrosanctis euangeliiis*), *OEGD* 312.5 (*Dialogi* 4.35 *depressis luminibus eis*). See also Laws of Alfred, in *Die Gesetze der Angelsächsischen*, ed. Felix Liebermann, 3 vols. (Halle: 1903–16), 42.7: *betynedum durum*, “the doors having been closed”; J. Ernst Wülfing, *Die Syntax in den Werken Alfreds des Grossen*, 2 vols. (Bonn, 1894 and 1901), vol. I, §95. For further contrasts with the more Latinate style (and vocabulary) of *OEHE* and *OEGD*, see Discenza, “Writing the Mother Tongue in the Shadow of Babel,” *Conceptualizing Multilingualism in England 800–1250*, ed. Elizabeth M. Tyler, *Studies in the Middle Ages* (Turnholt: 2011), 33–55.

64 See William H. Brown, “Method and Style in the Old English *Pastoral Care*,” *JEGP* 68 (1969): 666–684, at 684.

Consolatione and Augustine's *Soliloquiae* are philosophical works, in the form of dialogue, while the Psalms in the *Romanum* Psalter are themselves translations from the Hebrew, and in both subject matter and expression reflect their poetic origin, as well as being imbued with the authority of their supposed author, Old Testament king, David. By their very nature, these texts offer a translator very different kinds and numbers of opportunities for embellishment, so it is not surprising that there are also differences in the handling of their sources by the *Pastoral Care*, *Boethius*, *Soliloquies*, and *Psalms*. However, at the same time there are some very significant similarities between these four texts.

Expansions and Modifications

Although the four works of the canon vary considerably in the extent to which they break free from the restraints imposed on them by the texts they are translating, they agree in many respects in the ways in which they make expansions and other modifications to their sources, once again pointing to a single translator at work. There is, of course, far less illustrative expansion in the *Pastoral Care* than in the *Boethius* or *Soliloquies*, since the purpose of the *Regula Pastoralis* is exposition, so that there is no scope for significant disagreement, or engagement in debate, as there is in the works of Boethius and Augustine, and no need for extensive glosses or commentary such as the *De Consolatione* and Psalter had generated by the end of the ninth century.⁶⁵ What is more, in the *Regula Pastoralis*, Gregory himself provides a wealth of illustrations, a number of them in the form of Biblical quotations and allusions. However, in handling these, the translator on occasion reveals an ability to visualise situations that are no more than hinted at in them. Where the Latin, for instance, citing Ezechiel 34: 4, refers to the Lord chiding the shepherds, saying, "What was broken you have not bound up, and what was driven away you have not brought back," the translator, visualising a sheep with a broken leg, substitutes for "to bind up" the more specific term "to splint," *spilcan*.⁶⁶

65 For the special problems facing *Psalms*, see O'Neill's edition, 52.

66 For an Old English account of the treatment and splinting of broken legs, see *Bald's Leechbook*, in *Leechdoms, Wortcunning, and Starcraft of Early England*, ed. Oswald Cockayne, *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores* 35, 3 vols. (London: 1864–66), II (Bk. I) 25.2.1–2.

Regula Pastoralis II.vi.169–71: Quod fractum est non alligastis, et quod abiectum non reduxistis.

Pastoral Care 123.8–11: Ond eft ðurh ðone witgan wæs gecid hierdum, ða he cuæð: Ðæt sceap ðæt ðær sceonforod wæs ne spilcte ge ðæt, ond ðæt ðær forloren wæs ne sohte ge ðæt, ne ham ne brohtan.⁶⁷

There are no references to sheep in either the *Boethius* or *Soliloquies*, though of three brief allusions in the *Psalms*, one is in a slightly expanded simile, with the sheep of the Latin pictured as crowded together in their fold:

Psalms 48:13: Mid swylcum monnum byð hell gefylled swa swa fald mid sceapum, and se deað hy forswylcð on ecnesse.⁶⁸

Psalterium Romanum 48.13: Sicut oues in inferno positi sunt. mors [aeterna] depascet eos.⁶⁹

Shared Images

The way in which the members of the Alfredian canon exploit and expand on the possibilities for the use of images indeed shows clear links between them. One example, linking *Pastoral Care* and *Boethius*, involves the language of hunting, with the prefatory letter to the *Pastoral Care* using the terms *swæð*, *æfterspyrian*, and *spor* and the *Boethius*, *swæð*, *æfterspyrian*, and *spyrian æfter*:

Pastoral Care 5.15–18: Here one can still see their track [*swæð*], but we do not know how to pursue [*æfterspyrigan*] it,⁷⁰ and therefore we have now let go (*forlæten*) both the wealth and the wisdom, because we would not bend with our minds to the spoor [*spore*].

Boethius 39. 4–7: Why can you not see that he (*he*, i.e. Death) every day pursues [*spyrað...æfter*] birds and animals and men, and does not

67 “And again through the prophet shepherds were chided, when he said, ‘The sheep whose leg was broken there, you did not apply splints to that, and what was lost there, you did not search for that or bring [it] home.’”

68 “With such people will hell be filled, just like a fold with sheep, and death will devour them in eternity.”

69 “They are placed in hell like sheep. [Eternal] death will feed upon them.” For this possible reading see O’Neill’s edition, 266 (15).

70 For *æfterspyrigan* (a verb with the same root as *spor*) alternative renderings are “follow after,” “chase after.” For *him*, either “it” (the track) or “them” (our predecessors).

abandon [*forlæt*] any track [*swæð*] before he catches what he pursues [*æfterspyreð*]?⁷¹

Cf. *De Consolatione* 4m4, 3–4: Si mortem petitis, propinquat ipsa / sponte sua uolucres nec remoratur equos.⁷²

A second shared analogy is that of ships and seafaring. So, for example, in the *Pastoral Care* and *Soliloquies* we find images of ships and their anchors. In the former, we have a slight expansion of *Regula Pastoralis*'s reference to a ship moving against the stream:

Regula Pastoralis III.xxxiv.79–82: In hoc quippe mundo humana anima quasi more nauis est contra ictum fluminis conscendentis: uno in loco nequaquam stare permittitur, quia ad ima relabitur, nisi ad summa conetur.⁷³

Pastoral Care 445.9–14: Ac ælces mannes mod on ðys middangearde hæfð scipes ðeaw. Ðæt scip wile hwilum stigan ongean ðone stream, ac hit ne mæg, buton ða rowend hit teon, ac hit sceal fleotan mid ðy streame: ne mæg hit no stille gestondan, buton hit ankor gehæbbe, oððe mon mid roðrum ongean tion; elles hit gelent mid ðy streame.⁷⁴

In the *Soliloquies* the image of the ship, with its anchor cable and its anchor, is an addition which forms part of a larger passage, expanding on the subject of

71 See further, *Bo Metres* 27.9–16.

72 “If you seek death, she herself draws near of her own accord, and does not hold back the winged horses.” See the comment in *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 2, 456: “OEBO’s notion of Death pursuing birds and animals as well looks suspiciously like a mistaken or imaginative rendering of the *uolucres equos*.” For a discussion of hunting images in *Bo*, see further Nicole Guenther Discenza, *The King’s English: Strategies of Translation in the Old English Boethius* (Albany, NY: 2005), 101–104.

73 “For in this world the human soul is as if it is in the manner of a ship ascending against the thrust [i.e. ‘current’] of a river: it is never allowed to stay in one place, since it will slide back to the lowest part unless it attempts at the highest.” For the handling of the patristic *navis mentis* metaphor in the Alfredian canon, see further Miranda Wilcox, “Alfred’s Epistemological Metaphors: *eagan modes* and *scip modes*,” *ASE* 35 (2006): 179–217.

74 “For the mind of every man on this earth has the manner of a ship. The ship sometimes wishes to ascend against the current, but it cannot, unless the rowers propel it, but it must float with the current: it cannot stand still, unless an anchor holds it, or one pulls against [the current] with oars; otherwise it goes with the current.” For the possible range of meanings of OE *ac* here see *DOE* Ac (F) and (G).

the need to see with the eyes of the mind,⁷⁵ where it follows yet another new image, a simile of the voyager leaving his ship when he reaches the shore:

Soliloquies 22.18–25: For ðam þingum is ðearf þæt þu rihte hawie mid modes æagum to gode swa rihte swa swa scipes ancerstreng byð aþenæd on gerihte fram þam scype to þam ancra; and gefastna þa eagan þines modes on gode swa se ancer byð gefastnod on ðære eorðan. Þeah þæt scyp si ute on ðære sæ on þam yðum, hyt byð gesund [and] untoslegen, gyf se streng aþolað; forðam hys byð se oðer ende fast on þære eorðan and se oðer on ðam scype.⁷⁶

A different exploitation of the ship image—again in the *Pastoral Care*—is prompted by an illustration by Gregory the Great of the need to address the quantity not the quality of the sins some sinners commit:

RP III. xxxiii.10–13: Altos quippe gurgites fluminum, paruae sed innumerae replent guttae pluuiarum. Et hoc agit sentina latenter crescens, quod patenter procella saeuens.⁷⁷

Pastoral Care 437.12–17: Swiðe lytle beoð ða dropan ðæs smalan renes, ac hi wyrceað ðeah swiðe micel flod 7 swiðe strongne stream, ðonne hi gegaddrode beoð, forðonðe hira bið swiðe fela. Swiðe lytlum sicerað ðæt wæter 7 swiðe degellice on ðæt hlece scip, 7 ðeah hit wilnað ðæs ilcan ðe sio hlude yð deð on ðære hreon sae, buton hit mon ær utaweorpe.⁷⁸

In the *Boethius*, in contrast, the seafaring image is an addition to a discussion of God's foreknowledge in the *De Consolatione*:

75 For the patristic metaphor of the eyes of the mind see again Wilcox, "Alfred's Epistemological Metaphors."

76 "For these reasons it is necessary that you gaze directly on God with your mind's eyes, just as the ship's anchor-cable is stretched directly from the ship to the anchor, and fasten the eyes of your mind on God just as the anchor is fastened in the earth. Even though the ship should be out on the sea in the waves, it will be sound and unshattered if the cable holds out; for one end of it is fast in the earth and the other in the ship." [No equivalent in the Latin].

77 "For small but countless drops of rain refill the deep whirlpools of the rivers. And bilgewater, secretly increasing, acts the same as a tempest raging openly."

78 "Very tiny [*swiðe lytle*] are the drops of the small rain, but nevertheless they make a very great flood and very strong stream, when they are gathered together, because there are very many of them. Very little at a time [*swiðe lytlum*] and very imperceptibly the water trickles into the leaky ship, and yet it desires the same that the loud wave does in the rough sea, unless it is previously baled out."

Boethius 41.96–102: Fela is þæra þinga þe God ær wat ær hit gewyrðe...Nat he hit no forþi ðe he wille þæt hit gewyrðe, ac forþe þe he wile forwyrnan þæt hit gewyrðe, swa swa god scipstyra ongit micelne wind and hreo se ær ær hit wiorðe, and hæst fealdan þæt segl and eac hwilum lecggan þone mæst and lætan þa betinge, gif he ær þweores winde bætte; wærnað he hine wið þæt weder.⁷⁹

As for the *Soliloquies*, the comment that the mind is comforted by the knowledge that the misfortunes and unhappinesses of this world are not eternal is supported by yet another seafaring analogy: “swa swa scypes hlaforð, þonne þæt scyp ungetæslicost on ancre rit and seo sæ hreohost byð, ðonne wot he gewiss smelte wedere towæard.”⁸⁰

Finally in the *Psalms*, a brief allusion in the *Romanum* Psalter 47.8, to God destroying the ships of Tarsus, “in spiritu uehementi conterens naues,” is expanded: “hy wæron gebrytte swa hrædlice swa swa hradu yst windes scip tobrycð on þam sandum.”⁸¹

Yet other shared images are those of the garden and gardening, used, as we have seen, in the *Pastoral Care*, *Boethius* and *Soliloquies*, and of ascent by ladder,⁸² used in *Pastoral Care* and *Soliloquies*, while a number of passages are concerned with the relationship between a lord and his retainers. These are fully consistent with their author being a king,⁸³ aware of both his own

79 “There is many a thing that God knows before it happens...He (i.e. God) does not know it because he wishes that it should happen, but because he would like to prevent it happening, just as a good steersman already perceives a great wind and rough sea before it happens, and orders the sail to be furled and also sometimes the mast to be laid down and the beating to be stopped, if he previously has been beating against the wind; he protects himself against the weather.” No equivalent in *DCP*, 5p4. For the technical terms *bætan* and *bæting*, see *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 2, 227. For an important discussion of the elaboration and development of *DCP*’s imagery in *Bo*, see Discenza, *King’s English*, 64–65 and 100–105.

80 *Soliloquies* 30.9–11: “just as the ship’s master, when the ship rides at anchor most unsteadily and the sea is most rough, then he knows for certain that calm weather is on its way.”

81 “They were broken up as swiftly as a swift tempest of wind breaks a ship in pieces on the sands,” *Ps. Rom.* 47.8, “destroying ships with a powerful breath.” For this verse see *Prose Psalms*, ed. O’Neill, 263.

82 For the ladder image see *PC* 23.16–18, *Soliloquies* 46.7–14, and Thomas A. Carnicelli, *King Alfred’s Version of St. Augustine’s Soliloquies* (Cambridge, MA: 1969), 102, note on 78.17–20.

83 See, e.g., Discenza, *King’s English*, 80–86; Ruth Waterhouse, “Tone in Alfred’s Version of Augustine’s Soliloquies,” *Studies in Earlier Old English Prose*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: 1986) 71–78; and Pratt, “Problems.” For an opposing view, see Godden, “The

responsibilities and the dangers of misuse of royal power, and at the same time sensitive to the varying needs and circumstances of his people, from the courtier, kept back by favourites, and the people travelling to the king's court, down to the steersman battling against storms and rough seas.

Toning Down

A modification of a different type found in all four Old English texts may loosely be called "toning down," a softening of the hard line on sins taken in the source-texts. The condemnation expressed in the Latin source-texts of such things as wealth, power, fame, and luxurious living is no longer absolute. Thus, in the *Boethius*, for example, distinction is made between "worldly" and "true" pleasures, "false" and "good" fame, and so on.⁸⁴ In the *Soliloquies*, the things that the "I" of the dialogue is said to have decided to give up and not, for anything, return to, are immoderate wealth and immoderate honour, and an inordinately powerful and luxurious life (*ofermetta wela, and ofermytta wyrðscipe, and ungemetlice riclic and seftlic lyf*).⁸⁵ (Indeed, it is the over-greedy, not the greedy that have to be admonished.⁸⁶) As for the *Pastoral Care*, here the words *to ungemetlice* ("too immoderately"), are added to a passage from the New Testament quoted in the *Regula Pastoralis* ("Nemo militans Deo implicat se negotiis secularibus, ut ei placeat, cui se probavit"),⁸⁷ and the reason, to please God, is put in the negative, "lest he displease":

Pastoral Care 131.1–2: [Ne scyle] nan Godes ðeow hine selfne to ungemetlice bindan on woruldscipum, ðylæs he mislicige ðæm ðe he ær hine selfne gesealde.⁸⁸

Player King: Identification and Self-representation in King Alfred's Writings," *Alfred the Great*, ed. Reuter, 137–150; and *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 1, 144–145.

84 See further, e.g., Discenza, *King's English*.

85 *Soliloquies* 39.1–4. Rewriting of Augustine, *Soliloquia*, §1.xi.19, ending *nunc ea omnia prorsus aspernor* ("now I absolutely condemn them all").

86 See *PC* 313.6–13, at line 7, *ða ofergifran*, beside *RP* III.xix.57 *gulae dediti*, "given up to gluttony," the dangers of which are spelt out.

87 *RP* II.vii.41–43: "No one fighting for God entangles himself in secular businesses, that he may please Him to whom he recruited himself" (from II Timothy 2.4).

88 "No servant of God must *too immoderately* bind himself in worldly matters, lest he displease the one that he previously entrusted himself to." "Ne scyle" is Sweet's emendation of "Nele."

At the same time, it is stressed that although vengeance definitely awaits sinners on Judgement Day, this is only for those whose crimes against God are unatoned for (*ungebetta*).⁸⁹ Those who do evil and do not atone for it (*þæt ne betað*) will be rooted out from the earth.⁹⁰ God hates those who commit iniquity and do not forsake it, or are not sorry for it, and he destroys those who always tell lies:

Psalms 5:5: Ðu hatast ealle þa þe unriht wyrcað and þæt ne forlætað ne his ne hreowsiað; and þu fordest þa þe symle leasunga specað.⁹¹

However, those in authority who have led others astray are allowed to redeem themselves if they afterwards cease from this and convert as many as they can.⁹²

Good intentions have to be fully implemented—unless, that is, a good act has been abandoned other than of a person's own free will and accord ("hiora willes 7 hiora gewældes").⁹³ However, says Wisdom in the *Boethius*, the presence of full will can make the attempt as good as the successfully accomplished deed:

Boethius 36.212–16: Ic nat nu þeah ðu wille cweþan þæt ða godan onginon hwilum þæt hi ne magon forðbringan, ac ic cweðe þæt hi hit bringað simle forð. Peah hi þæt weorc ne mægen fulfremman, hi habbað þeah fullne willan, and se untweofealda willa bioð to tellenne for fullfremod weorc.⁹⁴

89 *RP* III.ix.78–79: "iuste uindicari omnia extremo iudicio" ("all things [will be] rightly avenged at the last judgment"), *PC* 220.17–18: "ealle scylda þe wið God beoð ungebetta beoð unforgifne on domes dæge 7 ryhtlice gewrecene." ("all sins against God that are unatoned for will be unforgiven on the day of judgement and rightly punished.").

90 *Psalms* 36:9: "for þæm þa þe yfel doð and þæt ne betað, hy beoð awyrtwalode of eorþan" ("for those who do evil and do not make amends for it, they will be rooted out from the earth"). See *Ps. Rom* "Quoniam qui malignantur exterminabuntur" and, for a gloss referring to the earth, "*de terra uiuentium*," *Prose Psalms*, ed. O'Neill, 235.

91 "You hate all who do evil and do not forsake it or repent of it, and you destroy those who always speak lies." The Latin is uncompromising: "Odisti omnes qui operantur iniquitatem. Perdes omnes qui loquuntur mendacium" ("You hate all who perform iniquity. You destroy all who speak untruth").

92 *PC* 191.5–9, addition to *RP* III.iv.14–16.

93 See *PC* 445.4–8.

94 "I do not know whether you will say that the good sometimes begin what they cannot bring to pass, but I say that they always bring it to pass. Though they may not be able fully

Similarly, after the terse, but moving, ending of the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, in the *De Consolatione*, three words, “*uidit, perdidit, occidit*,” (“[he] saw, lost, killed”), expanded to two sentences in the *Boethius*,—“*ƿa he forð on ƿæt leoht com, ƿa beseah he hine underbæc wið ðæs wifes. ƿa losede heo him sona*,”⁹⁵—the stern moral of the *De Consolatione*, 3m12.57–58 is retained, but softened by an added “get-out clause,” with its alliteration on *f*, its emphasis once again on *full-*, five times repeated, and its reassurance. The sinner, we are told, must not look behind him to his old evils—at least not so that he carries them out as fully [*swa fullice fullfremme*] as he previously did them. For, explains Wisdom,

Whoever with full intent [*mid fullon willan*] turns his mind to the evils that he previously gave up [*forlet*] and then fully carries them out [*fullfremmed*] and they then fully [*fullice*] please him, and he never intends to give them up [*forlætan*], he then loses [*forlyst*] all his earlier goods, unless he atones for it once more [*buton he hit eft gebete*].⁹⁶

Translation Techniques

In his letter circulated with the *Pastoral Care*, King Alfred describes the approach to translation that he has adopted in that work, rendering it into English “sometimes word by word and sometimes sense for sense,” just as he “understood it and might most intelligibly set it forth.”⁹⁷ It is in fact “sense for sense,” not close “word by word,” translation that is the general practice of all four texts (the terms “adaptation” or “transformation” might perhaps be even more appropriate⁹⁸) though to what extent is at least in part determined by the

to perform [*fulfremman*] that deed, they nevertheless have a complete intent [*fullne willan*] and the undoubted intent will be counted as the fully performed [*fulfremmod*] deed.” [No equivalent in *DCP*].

95 “When he came out into the light, then he looked back towards the woman. Then she was lost to him immediately.” *Bo* 35.245–47; cf. *DCP* 3m12.51.

96 *Boethius* 35.250–54: “Forþam swa hwa swa mid fullon willan his mod went to þam yflum þe he ær forlet and hi þonne fullfremeð and hi him þonne fullice liciað, and he hi næfre forlætan ne þencð, þonne forlyst he eall his ærran god buton he hit eft gebete.” The word “goods” in Godden and Irvine’s translation is used in the OED sense “Good”: C.III.6a.

97 *PC* 7.17–25, rendering the Latin tag “*verbum ex verbo, sensum ex sensu*.”

98 Even for the *Pastoral Care*. See, e.g., Potter, “Relation,” 41–45; and Janet M. Batelly, *The Literary Prose of King Alfred’s Reign: Translation or Transformation*, Inaugural Lecture,

nature and constraints of their different sources, with stylistic effect, moreover, no small consideration. Thus, for instance, a shared enjoyment in balanced constructions, contributing to sentence rhythms, is to be seen not only in their use of expressions such as *swa...swa...swæðer...* ("whether...or...whichever..."), *na/no ðæt an ðæt...ac...eac* ("not only...but also"), or of the more common *ægðer...ge...ge* ("both...and...and"), but also of correlations of adverbs and conjunctions, such as those with *þa* or *þonne* discussed by Elizabeth Liggins, and of word-pairs.⁹⁹

Fondness for word-pairs is, of course, not confined to the Alfredian canon. It is, for instance, a well-known feature of the *Bede* and *Dialogues*, where the translators are notoriously ready to use them to render a single word in their Latin source.¹⁰⁰ Both doublets and antitheses are found in some numbers in the texts of the canon, where they are often quite skilfully woven into larger patterns, using balance and syntactic variation.¹⁰¹ Along with the word-pair *idel 7 unnyt*, "vain and useless," for instance, we find the *Pastoral Care* employing also the antitheses of good and evil and doing and leaving off, framed and further balanced by the pair "neither...nor":¹⁰²

Pastoral Care 421.35–423.3: Ða ðonne sint to manienne ðe ða *gedonan* scylda wepað, 7 hi swaðeah ne *forlætað*, ðætte hi ongiten ðætte oft bið swiðe *idel 7 unnyt* [*Regula Pastoralis inutiliter*] ðara yfelena manna hreowsung, ðonne hi æfter ðæm ne tiliað *nauðer ne god to donne ne yfel to forlætanne*.¹⁰³

In the *Boethius*, Chapter 19, in a passage comparing heaven and earth, we have pairings not only of *idel* and *unnyt* but also of *hlisan* and *gilp*, and (with syntactic variation) of *gyddian* and *singende*; the balance of the introductory *ða...ða...ða* formula; of two clauses introduced by *hu* ("how") and containing the

King's College, London (1980); repr. in *Old English Prose: Basic Readings*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach with Deborah A. Oosterhouse (New York: 2000), 3–27, at 7–10.

99 Liggins, "Authorship," 292–293.

100 See, e.g. Potter, "Relation," 24–26; *Dialogue*, ed. Hecht, vol. 2, 87–96.

101 For an analysis of their strategic use in *Bo*, see Discenza, *King's English*, 58–60, and her detailed notes, 171–174.

102 *Idel* has a range of meanings in OE, including "useless, empty, vain" (glossing Latin (*super*)-*vacuus*, *inanis*, *vanus*, etc.), with *idel gylp* rendering *uana gloria* ("vainglory").

103 "Those then who bewail the crimes they have *done*, and nevertheless do not *leave* them *off*, are to be admonished so that they may understand that the repentance of the evil men is often very *vain* and *useless*, when they after that strive *neither to do good nor to abandon evil*." Rewriting of *RP* III.xxx.47–50.

opposition of “wide” and “narrow”; and the variation of *bið* and *is*. In *Psalm* 13 there is again a second word-pair (*secað 7 lufiað*), and repetition of the element *eall* (“all”) in *ealle* and *eallunga*, emphasising the contrast with *an*, “one”:

Boethius 19.1–5: *Þa se wisdom þa þis spell areht hæfde, þa ongan he gid-dian and þus singende cwæð, Swa hwa swa wilnige to habbenne þone idelan hlisan and þone unnyttan gilp (DCP petit gloriam, “seeks glory”), behealde he on feower healfe his hu widgille þæs heofones hwealfa bið, and hu neara þære eorðan stede is, þeah heo us rum ðince.*¹⁰⁴

Psalms 13:4: *Ac hi hine fleoð ealle endemes, and secað 7 lufiað þæt hy syn idle 7 unnytte: nis heora furðum an þe eallunga wel do.*¹⁰⁵

Compare with these the syntactical variation of *Psalm* 30.6, with the word order a: b: b: a, and with *unnyt* this time as a noun and paired with the noun *idelnes*:

*Pu me ahreddest, Drihten, rihtwisnesse God; þu hatodest þa þe beeodon idelnesse, and eac þa þe unnyt worhton.*¹⁰⁶

In the *Soliloquies*, in contrast, with no instances of *idel* and only one instance of *unnyt*, the latter is used in a different pairing—this time with its antonym *nyt*, and with *ic lufige*, “I love,” balanced by the addition of *me lufiað*, “love me.”

Soliloquies 13.14–16: *Ic nat þeah hwes ic þer bydde, hweðer ic bydde nyttes þe unnittes me sylfum, oððe þam freondum þe ic lufige and me lufiað.*¹⁰⁷

104 “When Wisdom then had delivered this speech, then he began to sing, and singing thus said: ‘Whoever wishes to have worthless fame and useless vainglory, let him behold on the four sides of him how widespreading the heaven’s vault is and how narrow the place of the earth is, though it may seem roomy to us.’” Cf. *DCP* 2m7.1–6.

105 “But they flee him all together, and seek and love to be vain and useless: there is not even one of them that does entirely well.” Cf. *Ps. Rom.* 13.3: “omnes declinaverunt simul. inutiles facti sunt. non est qui faciat bonum” (“All have turned away together, they have been made useless. There is no one that will do good”). For verbal similarities between *Psalms* here and *Bo* and *Sol*, see *Prose Psalms*, ed. O’Neill, 188 (3).

106 “You have saved me, Lord, God of righteousness; you have hated those who have cultivated vanity and also those who have done frivolous things.” As O’Neill comments, *Prose Psalms*, 223 (7) “A double translation of Ro. *observantes uanitatem*.”

107 “I do not know, however, what I am asking there—whether I am asking something useful or useless to me or to the friends whom I love and who love me.” cf. Augustine, *Soliloquia*, I. §6: “nescio quid mihi ex eo utile sit, vel eis quos diligō” (“I do not know what might be

Elsewhere we find rhyming pairs, as, for instance, in the following carefully structured verse in the *Psalms*:¹⁰⁸

Psalms 37:8: Ac ic eom *gesæged*, and *gehnæged*, and swiðe geeaðmed; and ic grymetige, and stene, swiþe swiðlice, mid ealle mode.¹⁰⁹

Another feature of our four texts is the use of alliteration for the purposes of sentence rhythm and emphasis. In the passage from the *Boethius* quoted above, for instance, we have alliteration on *h(w)*, (*hwa*, *habbene*, *hlisan*, *behealde*, *healfe*, *heofones*, *hwealfa*). The *Pastoral Care*, taking up its source's image of lowly but sweet-smelling plants, exploits the initial *w* of *wyrt* ("plant") to build up a sequence of four words beginning with that letter: "ða undiorestan wyrta ðe on wyrttunum weaxe, 7 ðeah swiðe welstincenda."¹¹⁰ In a carefully crafted pair of sentences in prose psalm 23, verses 1–2, we have alliteration on vowels (*eorðe*, *eall*, *eall*, *eardað*, *eorþan*, *eam*), and on *s* (*gesette*, *sæ*, *gestaðelode*), coupled with an envelope pattern formed by the placing of *Drihtnes ys* and *is Dryhtnes* at beginning and end of the first sentence and the variation *he gesette* and *he...gestaðelode* in a similar position in the second, framing the pair *ofer þære sæ* and *ofer ðam eam*.

Psalms 23.1–2: *Drihtnes ys eorðe* and *eall þæt heo mid gefyld is*; and *eall mancynn þe þæron eardað is Drihtnes*. He *gesette þa eorþan ofer þære sæ*, and *ofer ðam eam* he *hi gestaðelode*.¹¹¹

Lastly, for a combination of repetition, balance, contrast, variation, and alliterating pairs, as well as the expression *swiðe swiðlice*—recorded only in the

useful to me in that, or to those whom I love"). *PC* and *Psalms* each have one further instance of *idel 7 unnyt*.

108 Note also the rounding-off third past participle and a second (but unrhyming) wordpair "cry out and moan," followed by a pair of intensive adverbials.

109 "But I am *laid low* and *bowed down* and greatly humiliated; and I cry out and groan, very greatly, with all my heart." Cf. *Ps. Rom.* 37:9: "incurvatus sum et humiliatus sum usquequaque rugiebam a gemitu cordis mei." For *swiþe swiðlice* see further below, on this page and the next.

110 *PC* 439.32–3: "the least valuable of plants that grow in gardens, and yet very sweet smelling"; *RP* III.xxxiii.60–62 (with the pattern *ol* and *m*): "extrema quidem de oleribus maluit, sed tamen bene olentia memorare" ("he preferred to mention the meanest of herbs, but yet very sweet-smelling").

111 "The earth *is the Lord's* and all that it is filled with; and all mankind that dwells therein *is the Lord's*. He set the earth *over the sea*, and *over the rivers* he established it." See further Bately, "Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything?," 194.

Boethius, *Soliloquies* and *Psalms*, where it is found thirteen times in all,—see the following passage, picked at random from the *Soliloquies* and with no equivalent in Augustine:¹¹²

Soliloquies 25.6–12: Gyf he ðonne æce is, hwí ne lufast ðu þane æcan hlaforð swiðor þonne ðone lænan? Hwat! ðu wast þæt se æca þe naht fram ne gewyt, buton þu fram hym gewite; and þu scealt nide fram ðam oðrum, sam þu wille, sam þu nelle; oððe ðu scealt hine forlætan oððe he þe. Ic gehyre þeah þæt þu hine lufast swiðe swi[ð]lice, and eac ondredst and weldest; swiðe rihte and swiðe gerisenlice þu dest.¹¹³

Conclusion

This chapter began with two questions. Did King Alfred write anything?—and if he did, what works may we safely conclude he “wrote” (or more probably “dictated”)? To answer the first question first, no good reason has yet been given to compel us to discount the contemporary evidence for either the king’s responsibility for the rendering into English of the *Regula Pastoralis*, or for the manner in which that was undertaken, however learned we may assume the West Saxon bishops may or may not have not been at the time, and whatever the level of help he might have received at any stage of the procedure.¹¹⁴ Help he may have had all along the line, but with Alfred at the end of the day responsible for the final version. As for the second question: If we accept Alfred’s authorship of the *Pastoral Care*, the many agreements in matters of lexis, syntax and style, as well as a shared approach to the processes of translation, indicating a strong link between it, the *Boethius*, *Psalms* and (to a lesser extent) *Soliloquies*, enable us to arrive at a canon of the king’s literary, as opposed to legal, compositions.

This canon is defined also in part by negatives, namely by the absence of features characteristic of those texts that do not belong to it. In terms of language and style, it is not like the *Bede* and *Dialogues*, or the *Orosius* and

¹¹² *Bo* 5x, *Soliloquies* and *PPS* each 4x.

¹¹³ “If he then is eternal, why do you not love the eternal Lord more intensely than the transitory? Lo, you know that the eternal one will not depart from you, unless you depart from him; and you must necessarily [depart] from the other whether you want to, whether you don’t want to; either you must leave him, or he you. I hear, however, that you love him very intensely, and also fear him, and well you do; very rightly and very suitably you do.”

¹¹⁴ See Godden’s argument, “Alfredian Project,” 102–107.

Chronicle.¹¹⁵ Its members do not demonstrate the lexical preferences that were to become typical of Ælfric and what is often referred to as the “Winchester School.” (In some ways the usage of the canon is closer to the writings of Ælfric’s contemporary, Wulfstan). Not here the close, often word-for-word rendering of, once again, the *Bede* and *Dialogues* or the rhythmical prose of an Ælfric. At the same time, although thanks to the very different challenges posed by the works they are translating—the *Boethius* and *Soliloquies* showing considerable independence from their Latin sources, whereas freedom of manoeuvre in the case of the *Pastoral Care* and *Psalms* is restricted by the nature of theirs, the one, whose purpose is instruction, not to be queried, the other (like the extract from *Exodus* in the material preparatory to Alfred’s law code) having the authority of Holy Writ—all nevertheless demonstrate the same authorial preparedness to reshape, if not necessarily the sense, yet certainly the expression, right down to the level of the phrase, with the text of *Psalms* in particular revealing considerable craftsmanship in the process. It is tempting to interpret all this as the work of someone who not only had listened to scholars comment on the texts he was studying and discussed them with them, but was then, as a layman, confident and “unscholarly” enough to produce his own personal and sometimes arguably (unintentionally?) unorthodox interpretations of them.¹¹⁶

The order of composition of the canon can only be conjectural, though it is not unreasonable to suppose that the *Pastoral Care* was the first text undertaken, and plausibly, but not necessarily, the *Psalms* the last, while it is generally held that the *Boethius*—again plausibly—preceded the *Soliloquies*.¹¹⁷ The earliest date for the *Pastoral Care* would seem to be the year 888, following the king’s decision to pass on his knowledge to others, leaving ample time before his death in 899 for translation of all four texts.¹¹⁸ (Incidentally, a much later monarch, the first Queen Elizabeth (1533–1603), completed her translation of the *De Consolatione* (1593) in less than a month, working at it for only two

115 For a discussion of the suggestion that in its classical additions *Bo* may owe something to the *Orosius*, see Janet Bately, “Those Books that it is Necessary for All Men to Know,” in *The Classics in the Middle Ages*, ed. Aldo S. Bernardo and Saul Levin, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies (Binghampton, N.Y.: 1990), 45–78, esp. 59–65, and “Dating.”

116 See Godden, of *Bo*: “this really looks more like the work of an educated intellectual familiar with the commentary tradition, and hence probably well aware that he was exploring dangerous or at least unorthodox territory” (“Alfredian Project,” 114).

117 For the ranking of *Psalms*, see the reasoned arguments in *Prose Psalms*, ed. O’Neill, 95. For that of *Soliloquies* see, e.g., *Soliloquies*, ed. Carnicelli, Introduction §7. For a reexamination of the dating of the *Boethius*, see Bately, “Dating.”

118 Above, 116, n. 13.

hours a day.) As for the relationship—if any—of the four texts to Alfred's plan, and whether or not the translations of Bede and Orosius were undertaken in response to the request circulated by the king, this is once again very much a matter for conjecture.¹¹⁹ However, it has to be remembered that this very devout ninth-century king's expressed primary interest lay in the pursuit of wisdom, and of an understanding of God and of God's purpose, the restoration of which to the land was a prerequisite for peace and stability.¹²⁰ In which case—and particularly given the small number of relevant Latin writings of any substance that appear to have been available in Wessex at the time—the four members of the Alfredian canon might have seemed very suitable candidates for translation.¹²¹

119 Of the many discussions of "Alfred's plan," see most recently, Godden, "Alfredian Project," *passim*, the relevant chapters in this volume, and Bately, "Dating."

120 See Bately, "Literary Prose," 7–10.

121 See Bately, "Those Books," 67, n. 18 and Michael Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Library* (Oxford: 2006).

The Alfredian Prefaces and Epilogues

Susan Irvine

Introduction

The works traditionally thought to be produced in or around Alfred's reign are accompanied in many cases by introductory and concluding pieces, known as prefaces (or prologues) and epilogues. These prefaces and epilogues—here called “Alfredian”—are remarkable not only as compositions in their own right but also for the insights they offer into vernacular literary production and reception in Anglo-Saxon England. The independence of the pieces from their Latin sources within a literary tradition heavily reliant on translation means that they offer a rare glimpse into the interests and motivations of the writers and readers of vernacular works. This is not of course to imply that we can accept everything they say at face value; they exploit the techniques and conventions of their genres just like any other literary composition. But they enhance our awareness both of contemporary notions of self-representation, authority and authorship—especially through their construction of Alfred as the ultimate scholar king—and of contemporary perceptions of literary style and register.

The Alfredian prefaces and epilogues draw on an established literary tradition of their own. A range of precedents, mainly in Latin, can be identified. With Latin culture as the predominant literary model in this period, writers in the vernacular relied heavily on Latin traditions as a means of investing their own works with the authority implicit in the use of Latin.¹ We cannot assume that these authors had any direct knowledge of classical rhetorical writings on the conventional strategies of the preface or epilogue, though they could have had access to encyclopedias with chapters on rhetoric such as those by Martianus Capella, Cassiodorus and Isidore of Seville.² More pertinently,

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- 1 See Martin Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture: 'Grammatica' and Literary Theory, 350–1100* (Cambridge: 1994), esp. Chapter 9; and Robert Stanton, *The Culture of Translation in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: 2002), esp. Chapter 2.
 - 2 On the conventions of the Latin preface, see Tore Janson, *Latin Prose Prefaces: Studies in Literary Conventions*, *Studia Latina Stockholmiensia* 13 (Stockholm: 1964). For discussion of the extent of the knowledge of classical rhetoric in Anglo-Saxon England, see especially

perhaps, a number of examples of the use of prefaces and epilogues would have been available. In some cases the main Latin source contained its own preface or epilogue (or both). The *Regula Pastoralis*, for example, has a preface and epilogue in which Pope Gregory directly addresses John of Ravenna, who prompted the work's composition, and Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* offers a prefatory letter to King Ceolwulf and a concluding prayer. The Latin prefaces to saints' lives written in early Anglo-Saxon England, such as those in Bede's two lives of St Cuthbert, also offered a structural model.³ The Anglo-Saxon authors perhaps drew as well on the precedent of the Latin prefaces to biblical translations by authors such as Jerome.⁴

Other models for prefaces and epilogues in prose and verse would have been available, as Malcolm Godden has recently shown, in the work of Carolingian writers such as Alcuin, whose prose preface to Paul the Deacon's homiliary and verse preface to his own *De dialectica* show some similarities to the prose and verse prefaces to the OE *Pastoral Care* respectively.⁵ Alcuin's composition of prefaces for works not his own offers a precedent too for those Alfredian prefaces which were produced separately, and by different authors, from the works they introduced. Although the precise nature and extent of their sources may remain uncertain, it is clear that the Alfredian prefaces and epilogues represent the harnessing of Latin traditions to elevate vernacular discourse which is so characteristic of Alfredian book-production.⁶

Whether the authors were also influenced by vernacular culture in their provision of prefaces and epilogues is less certain. Old English poetry offers examples of prefaces and epilogues incorporated into the works themselves,

Jackson J. Campbell, "Knowledge of Rhetorical Figures in Anglo-Saxon England," *JEGP* 66 (1967): 1–20; Helmut Gneuss, "The Study of Language in Anglo-Saxon England," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 72 (1990): 1–32; Gabriele Knappe, "Classical Rhetoric in Anglo-Saxon England," *ASE* 27 (1998): 5–29; and Luke M. Reinsma, "Rhetoric in England: the Age of Aelfric, 970–1020," *Communication Monographs* 44 (1977): 390–403.

3 Allen J. Frantzen, "The Form and Function of the Preface in the Poetry and Prose of Alfred's Reign," in *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-Century Conferences*, ed. Timothy Reuter (Aldershot, Hants.: 2003), 121–136, at 126–128.

4 Jerome's use of the "word for word, sense for sense" *topos* may have prompted that in the prose preface to the OE *Pastoral Care*; see Stanton, *The Culture of Translation*, 82, and Nicole Guenther Discenza, "'Wise wealhstodas': The Prologue to Sirach as a Model for Alfred's Preface to the *Pastoral Care*," *JEGP* 97 (1998): 488–499, esp. 494 nn. 12 and 13.

5 Malcolm Godden, "Prologues and Epilogues in the Old English *Pastoral Care*, and their Carolingian Models," *JEGP* 110 (2011): 441–473.

6 See David Pratt, *The Political Thought of King Alfred the Great* (Cambridge: 2007), 184.

such as the first fifty-two lines of *Beowulf*, the epilogues to the Cynewulf poems, the narrator's words at the beginning and end of *The Dream of the Rood*, and perhaps the five lines bordered by "swa cwæð" at each end of *The Wanderer*. In many cases these vernacular poems are themselves informed by Latin textuality: the frames can work to situate the poems within a larger intertextual frame of Latin literate culture, as Martin Irvine notes in relation to *The Dream of the Rood* and *Elene*.⁷ The two cultures, vernacular poetic and Latin literate, are far from distinct.

Although the Alfredian prefaces and epilogues belong to an established tradition of framing pieces, they are characterized as much by their differences from one another as by their similarities. They range widely in their dates and contexts of composition, depending on whether they framed the work *ab initio* or were supplied at a later stage of transmission. They are written by a number of different authors using various voices (including Alfred's, the book's, and the scribe's). In some cases, but not all, claims are made for Alfred's personal investment in the works as writer or patron. They also vary considerably in their length, the kind of information they provide, their modes of discourse (prose and verse, for example), and the nature of their relationship to the works they frame.

Setting the parameters of the corpus is itself not an easy task. A number of frame-pieces test the boundaries in various ways. A notorious example is the preface to the OE *Laws*, whose lengthy opening, a translation of excerpts from the Book of Exodus, has often been treated as peripheral to the law-code itself.⁸ The role of this opening, however, in highlighting the relationship between Christian law and Mosaic law is "the key of the whole enterprise," as Patrick Wormald acknowledges, making the passages from Exodus an integral part of the preface as a whole.⁹ A different kind of example is found in the OE *Boethius* which, in addition to its prose and verse prefaces, contains an introductory account of Boethius and the circumstances of his work which is also independent of *De Consolatione Philosophiae*. But in the prose version of the work this account follows the list of chapters (whereas the prose preface precedes it), and itself comprises the first chapter.¹⁰ So although it presents independent

7 Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, 437–449.

8 See also in this volume Mary Richards, Chapter 10, "The Laws of Alfred and Ine," which treats both the preface and the body of the Laws.

9 Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century* (Oxford: 1999), 418.

10 The Alfredian prefaces and epilogues in their manuscript context normally appear outside the apparatus of the translation itself, such as the lists of chapters (in the OE *Pastoral*

introductory material, it is not here treated as a preface. Another ambiguous example is the “genealogical preface” to the Parker version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which, although it arguably takes on the role of a preface in its manuscript context, consists entirely of a genealogical list.¹¹ Then there are the vernacular prefaces and epilogues which are translated from the Latin sources. Though not independent of the source, they maintain in varying ways their original function as frame-pieces. In the OE *Pastoral Care* they act as an inner frame, itself set within the outer frame of the independent prefaces and epilogue. In the OE *Bede*, however, Bede’s preface and epilogue are the only frame-pieces, except in one manuscript (Cambridge, Corpus College Christi 41) where an independent verse epilogue, added by a later scribe, supplements the prose epilogue translated from the source. Here the blurred line between source and independent material is exploited by the scribe, as we shall see. Furthermore, by analogy with this eleventh-century scribal addition at the end of one manuscript of the OE *Bede*, a prayer added to the end of the copy of the prose version of the OE *Boethius* (in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 180) might also arguably qualify as an “epilogue.”

The function of the prefaces and epilogues as framing pieces raises questions about the appropriateness of reading and interpreting them away from the context of the works which they frame. How justifiable is it to address them as independent entities rather than as elements of a larger work? It is evident that the relationship between each whole work and its frame-pieces is a curiously paradoxical one. In form and argument, the preface or epilogue is undoubtedly detached from the work it frames. So in its manuscript context it is often set apart visually from the rest of the work: it may, for example, be written on a separate leaf or in a different hand, marked out by one or more line-spaces or a large initial, or presented in a different format. Conversely, it is clearly inappropriate to treat prefaces and epilogues as if they were separate works in their own right. There is no evidence that they circulated independently of the translations themselves, and no Alfredian preface or epilogue acts as a frame for more than one work, even though a number of them make no specific reference to what follows or precedes.

Care and *Boethius*) or lists of previous writings (in the OE *Bede*); see Janet Bately, “Book Divisions and Chapter Headings in the Translations of the Alfredian Period,” in *Early Medieval English Texts and Interpretations: Studies Presented to Donald G. Scragg*, ed. Elaine Treharne and Susan Rosser (Tempe, Arizona: 2002), 151–66. Although such apparatus is also part of the frame, or paratext (see below), of the work, it is distinctive from the prefaces and epilogues which are the primary focus of this chapter.

11 See Chapter 12 below.

The fixed relationship which manuscript evidence records between a work and its frame-piece(s) often belies a more complex underlying picture. In some cases this relationship is one that has developed only in the process of transmission. As we shall see, prefaces and epilogues continued to reflect and shape how the works associated with Alfred were read well beyond the king's reign. Whether they are contemporary with the works they frame or later additions, whether original or forged—and sometimes we cannot be sure—they are an integral part of an on-going process of presenting the text.

The Alfredian prefaces and epilogues exploit in a variety of ways the potential of the frame structure to justify and authorize the works themselves, as this chapter will show. The prefaces and epilogues will be examined in the context of the works to which they belong, although, as will become apparent, in some cases they may reflect moments in the process of transmission which are very distinct from the work's original composition.

The Prefaces to the OE *Dialogues*

The OE *Dialogues* was probably composed before Alfred's translation programme was fully conceived or implemented.¹² The work, according to Asser, was translated by Wærferth, bishop of Worcester, at the king's instigation.¹³ Two full copies of the OE *Dialogues* survive, one from the second half of the eleventh century (CCCC 322) and one from the beginning of the eleventh century (London, BL, Cotton Otho C.i, vol. 2). The former contains a prose preface, the latter a verse one.¹⁴ Fascinating documents in their own right, these two prefaces also show the varying and complex ways in which a frame may reflect and shape response to a text.

The prose preface may well represent the earliest use of the prefatory form in Old English. It is written in Alfred's voice, though the evidence argues strongly for an author other than Alfred (possibly Wærferth).¹⁵ In the prose preface "Alfred" explains how the work came to be written:

12 For the preface and the *Dialogues* themselves, see also in this volume David Johnson, Chapter 13, "Alfredian Apocrypha: The Old English *Dialogues* and *Bede*."

13 W.H. Stevenson (ed.), *Asser's Life of King Alfred, together with the Annals of Saint Neots, erroneously ascribed to Asser* (Oxford: 1959), 62 (Chapter 77).

14 The prose preface also occurs in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 76 (s. xi¹), which contains an extensively revised and fragmentary version of Books I and II of the OE *Dialogues*, based on a version similar to that in CCCC 322.

15 Malcolm Godden, "Wærferth and King Alfred: The Fate of the Old English *Dialogues*," in *Alfred the Wise: Studies in Honour of Janet Bately on the Occasion of her Sixty-fifth Birthday*,

Ic Ælfred geofendum Criste mid cynehades mærnysse geweorðod, habbe gearolice ongyten and þurh haligra boca gesægene oft gehyred, þætte us, þam þe God swa micle heanesse worldgeþingða forgifen hafað, is seo mæste ðearf, þæt we hwilon ure mod betwix þas eorþlican ymbhigdo geleoðigen and gebigen to ðam godcundan and þam gastlican rihte. And forþan ic sohte and wilnade to minum getreowum freondum, þæt hi me of Godes bocum be haligra manna þeawum and wundrum awriten þas æfterfylgendan lare, þæt ic þurh þa mynegunge and lufe gescyrped on minum mode betwih þas eorðlican gedrefednese hwilum gehicge þa heofonlican.¹⁶

Alfred's own role in the work's production is emphasised here, but the use of his name and first-person voice to confer on it the stamp of royal authority only makes sense in the context of the work's reception by readers other than Alfred. Indeed it is possible, as Godden has argued, that the story that the king originally commissioned the translation for his own use is "a fiction, a way of both lending his authority to the text and justifying use of the vernacular, and the real target was always circulation to other readers."¹⁷ Certainly the preface, if not the work itself, has been written with wider circulation in mind. The use of first-person plural pronouns in the preface ("us," "ure," and "we"), to be interpreted as genuine plurals rather than the plural of majesty, may reflect this

ed. Jane Roberts and Janet L. Nelson with Malcolm Godden (Cambridge: 1997), 37–51, at 36–37, argues that the preface was written by Wærferth. See also Malcolm Godden, "The Alfredian Project and its Aftermath: Rethinking the Literary History of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 162 (2009), 93–122, at 96 n.10. Janet Batley, "The Alfredian Canon Revisited: One Hundred Years On," in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Reuter, 107–120, at 114–117, and Batley, "Alfred as Author and Translator" (Chapter 4 above), argues that the preface may have been written by a member of Alfred's entourage on the king's behalf.

16 Hans Hecht (ed.), *Bischof Wærferths von Worcester Übersetzung der Dialoge Gregors des Grossen*, Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa 5 (Leipzig and Hamburg: 1905–07), 1: "I, Alfred, honoured with the glory of kingship by Christ's gift, have clearly perceived and frequently heard from statements in holy books that for us, to whom God has granted such high platform of worldly office, there is the greatest need occasionally to calm our minds amongst these earthly anxieties and turn them to divine and spiritual law. And therefore I sought and asked of my true friends that they should write down for me from God's books the following teaching concerning the virtues and miracles of holy men, so that, strengthened through those exhortations and love, I might occasionally reflect in my mind on heavenly things amongst these earthly tribulations."

17 Godden, "The Alfredian Project," 100.

sense of a broader audience.¹⁸ These first-person plural pronouns also, more importantly, alert us to a link which is being drawn between Alfred and Gregory the Great himself. “We,” it transpires, connects the king with the author of the Latin *Dialogi*. The conceit underlying this preface—the tension between worldly matters and spiritual contemplation—is borrowed from the opening of Book I of the *Dialogi*.¹⁹ The similarities in idea between “Alfred”’s preface and Gregory’s words were designed, I would suggest, to encourage readers to compare the two figures.²⁰ In struggling to reconcile worldly and spiritual commitments, and finding a way to resolve these through literary pursuits, Alfred is being implicitly paralleled to Gregory the Great. The close links between the preface and the opening of Gregory’s work contribute to a construction of Alfred as a successor to Gregory, imbued with all his religious and literary authority. It is a construction of the king that later prefaces would develop, as we shall see.

The other full copy of the OE *Dialogues* contains a quite different preface altogether, one which is written in verse rather than in prose. The lack of the prose preface is puzzling, not only because of the authority Alfred’s name bestowed on the work but also because there were few precedents in Latin works for a prose text being introduced by a verse prologue alone.²¹ It is possible that the verse preface was written to supply a preface where one was otherwise unavailable (perhaps because the prose one was not included in the exemplar, or was felt to be unsuitable).²² But it is not inconceivable that both prefaces circulated with the OE *Dialogues* at one stage; in one manuscript of

18 There are no certain uses of the plural of majesty before the twelfth century; see Bruce Mitchell, *Old English Syntax*, 2 vols (Oxford: 1985, rpt. with corrections, 1987), I.107.

19 See A. de Vogüé (ed.), *Grégoire le Grand, Dialogues*, trans. P. Antin, 3 vols, Sources Chrétiennes 251, 260, 265 (Paris: 1978–80), II.12. For the Old English translation, see Hecht, *Dialogue*, 3–4. Kees Dekker, “King Alfred’s Translation of Gregory’s *Dialogi*: Tales for the Unlearned?,” in *Rome and the North: The Early Reception of Gregory the Great in Germanic Europe*, ed. Rolf H. Bremmer Jr, Kees Dekker, and David F. Johnson (Paris: 2001), 27–50 at 36, notes the “purposeful echo of Gregory’s own introduction,” though he does not consider its implications for the portrayal of Alfred.

20 For discussion of the nature of the readership for the work, see Dekker, “King Alfred’s Translation,” and David F. Johnson, “Who Read Gregory’s *Dialogues* in Old English?,” in *The Power of Words: Anglo-Saxon Studies Presented to Donald G. Scragg on his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Hugh Magennis and Jonathan Wilcox (Morgantown: 2006), 171–204.

21 Godden, “Prologues and Epilogues,” 443–44.

22 See Godden, “Wærferth and King Alfred,” 39–40; and Malcolm Godden, “Editing Old English Prose and the Challenge of Revision or, Why It Is Not So Easy to Edit Old English Prose,” in *Probable Truth: Editing Medieval Texts from Britain in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Vincent Gillespie and Anne Hudson (Turnhout: 2013), 91–110, at 95.

the OE *Pastoral Care* (Cambridge, Trinity College R.5.22, copied in the late tenth or early eleventh century), we might note, the prose preface is omitted and the verse one stands alone.²³

The verse preface was apparently composed after Bishop Wulfsgie of Sherborne had received a copy of the OE *Dialogues* from Alfred, and was intended to accompany a further copy commissioned by Wulfsgie.²⁴ In this preface, as in the verse prefaces to the OE *Pastoral Care* and (arguably) the OE *Boethius*, the first-person voice is that of the book itself. The book is imagined as addressing us as readers. Although parallels may be found here with riddles (both Latin and vernacular), in which personified objects describe themselves in the first person, a closer analogue can be found in a prefatory poem by Alcuin, as Godden has shown.²⁵ By employing the conceit of the book as first-person speaker, the authors of these poems draw attention to the book as a physical object, treating it as an emblem of the authority that the text represents.

The verse preface to the OE *Dialogues* combines the use of book as speaker with various other stylistic techniques to emphasise the value and authority of the work it introduces:

Se ðe me rædan ðencð	tyneð mid rihtum geðance.	
He in me findan mæg,	gif hine feola lysteð	
gastlices lifes	godre biesene,	
þæt he ful eape mæg	upp gestigan	
to ðam heofonlican hame	þar byð a hyht ond wyn,	5
blis on burgum,	þam þe bearn Godes	
sielfes hiora eagum	geseon motan.	
Þæt mæg se mon begytan,	se þe his modgeðanc	
æltowe byþ	ond þonne þurh his ingehygd	
to þissa haligra	helpe geliefeð	10

23 See Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 87, item 1 (132).

24 Thomas A. Bredehoft, *Authors, Audiences, and Old English Verse* (Toronto: 2009), 70, ascribes the poem to Alfred's reign on metrical and stylistic grounds.

25 For parallels with riddles, see James W. Earl, "King Alfred's Talking Poems," in *Thinking About "Beowulf"* (Stanford: 1994), 87–99; Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe, "Listening to the Scenes of Reading: King Alfred's Talking Prefaces," in *Orality and Literacy in the Middle Ages: Essays on a Conjunction and its Consequences in Honour of D.H. Green*, ed. Mark Chinca and Christopher Young (Turnhout: 2005), 17–36; Peter Orton, "Deixis and the Untransferable Text: Anglo-Saxon Colophons, Verse-Prefaces and Inscriptions," in *Imagining the Book*, ed. Stephen Kelly and John J. Thompson (Turnhout: 2005), 195–207. For links to Alcuin's poem, see Godden, "Prologues and Epilogues," 462–63.

ond hiora bisene fulgað, swa þeos boc sagað.
 Me awritan het Wulfsige bisceop,
 þeow ond þearfa þæs þe alne þrym aof
 ond eac walden is wihta gehwelcre,
 an ece God eallra gesceafta. 15
 Bideþ þe se bisceop se þe ðas boc begeat,
 þe þu on þinum handum nu hafast ond sceawast,
 þæt þu him to þeossum halgum helpe bidde,
 þe heora gemynd her on gemearcude siendon,
 ond þæt him God ællmihtig 20
 forgyue þa gyltas þe he geo worhte
 ond eac resðe mid him se ðe ah ealles rices geweald,
 ond eac swa his beahgifan, þe him ðas bysene forgeaf,
 þæt is se selesða sinces brytta,
 Ælfryd mid Englum, ealra cyninga 25
 þara þe he sið oððe ær fore secgan hyrde,
 oððe he iorðcyninga ær ænigne gefrugne.²⁶

26 Susan Irvine and Malcolm Godden (eds. and trans.), *The Old English Boethius with Verse Prologues and Epilogues Associated with King Alfred*, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library (Cambridge, Mass.: 2012), 404–405: “He who sets out to read me will close me with proper understanding. If he wishes for many good examples of the spiritual life, he can find them in me, so that he can very easily ascend to the heavenly home where there is ever hope, joy and bliss in those dwellings, for those who may see the son of God himself with their own eyes. That can be gained by any person whose mind is sound and then through his understanding trusts in the help of these saints and carries out their example, as this book says. Bishop Wulfsige commanded me to be written, the poor servant of him who exalted all glory and is also the ruler of every creature, one eternal God of all creation. The bishop who procured this book, which you now have in your hands and gaze at, requests that you should pray these holy men whose memories are inscribed in here to help him, and ask almighty God to forgive the sins which he formerly committed and also to grant him rest with him who has power over every kingdom, and also to grant rest to his treasure-giver who gave him the book’s exemplar [*or these examples*], that is Alfred of the English, the best distributor of treasure of all the kings that he has ever before heard of, or of earthly rulers that he has known about.” The metrical preface is followed by an introductory comment (also occurring only in Cotton Otho C.i) which compares the contents of the book to a stream of water running from a pure spring. This resembles introductory comments to Books II, III and IV which occur not only in Cotton Otho C.i but also in the other manuscripts. Dekker, “King Alfred’s Translation,” 35 n.47, argues that these comments “can be seen in the light of the classical and medieval tradition of adding *capitula* to the beginnings of complete books, texts or chapters, to introduce to the reader briefly the content of the following text in an age when tables of contents were very rare.”

The book refers to itself in the first person three times (in lines 1, 2, and 12). It also refers to itself as “this book” (in lines 11 and 16). The book’s provision of “bisene” (examples) is emphasised, the word ‘bisen’ appearing three times (in lines 3, 11, and 23).²⁷ In its first two usages the word’s meaning is clear: it refers to the examples of spiritual life offered by the book. In its third usage, “þe him ðas bysene forgeaf,” the meaning is less clear-cut. It may refer to the “exemplar” from which the book has been copied (hence “who gave him [the book’s] exemplar”).²⁸ But, in keeping with the poem’s earlier usages, it could also refer to the “examples” of spiritual life which were contained in the book Alfred gave to Wulfsgie (“who gave him these examples”). The very ambiguity here may enrich the poem’s meaning. Alfred is a giver of treasure (“beahgifan,” line 23) whose value is not only physical—the book as object—but also spiritual (the models of virtuous behavior it contains). The idea of the book as a repository of spiritual guidance can be found earlier in the poem too: the reader is urged to follow the saints’ “bisene” (examples), as this “boc” (book) says (line 11). The “b” alliteration is picked up again later in the poem to draw attention to the link between the book and treasure: in line 23 “bysene” (exemplar/examples) alliterates with “beahgifan” (treasure giver), and this is echoed alliteratively in the following line in “sinces brytta” (giver of treasure). In a semantic pattern which reflects the alliterative one, “bysene” is enveloped by two words meaning “treasure-giver.” The ideas of Alfred as treasure-giver and the giving of the exemplar and examples are therefore closely linked to one another, deftly setting up an interplay between physical and spiritual treasure. The preface emphasizes the value of the physical book held in the reader’s hands by acknowledging its role as a repository of spiritual treasure. A similar play between physical and spiritual can be seen in other images in the poem: joy in the heavenly home is described as “blis in burgum” (line 6), a phrase used twice elsewhere in Old English poetry, both times referring to earthly cities; seeing the Son of God “sielfes hiora eagum” (line 7) offers a reminder of the process of reading even as it simultaneously describes the spiritual contemplation of Christ in heaven.

This verse preface does not fit entirely easily within its manuscript context. As we saw, it seems to have been written originally to accompany a copy of the *Dialogues* commissioned by Wulfsgie. But the manuscript in which it now survives was written over a century later: this copy of the *Dialogues* was begun in the first quarter of the eleventh century and completed later in the same

27 Bredehoft, *Authors, Audiences*, 75, notes that “‘bisen’ is a relatively infrequent word in Old English verse.”

28 See *DOE*, “bysen” sense 2.

century. At some stage in this process an annotator took it upon himself to rectify the anachronism of the preface, apparently altering “Wulfsige” (line 12) to read “Wulfstan.”²⁹ It is just conceivable that the annotator thought he was restoring a correct reading: if, as Ker and Sisam suggest, the emendation refers to Bishop Wulfstan I of Worcester (Wulfstan the homilist), then the annotator may have assumed that Wulfstan was indeed the bishop responsible for commissioning this copy of the OE *Dialogues*.³⁰ More probably, however, given the conjectured date of s.xi² for the alteration, the annotator was referring to Wulfstan II of Worcester (Saint Wulfstan), for whose use the manuscript may have been prepared.³¹ But although it makes good sense to have Wulfstan as the procurer of “this book which you now have in your hand and gaze on,” it makes a lot less sense for this Wulfstan to pray on behalf of his treasure-giver Alfred “who gave him the book’s exemplar.” Wulfsige’s name may not fit this particular copy, but Wulfstan’s too is anomalous. The preface simultaneously bears witness to the constantly evolving nature of the manuscript text, and the potential pitfalls of the transmission process.

The Prefaces and Epilogue to the OE *Pastoral Care*

Two prefaces (in prose and verse respectively) and a verse epilogue frame the OE *Pastoral Care*, all three independent of the main work which additionally contains translations of Gregory’s own preface and epilogue. They clearly belong to an early stage in the programme of publication since they were included in two ninth-century manuscripts containing the work—London, BL, Cotton Tiberius B.xi, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 20—whose copying can be linked to the process of production and circulation described in the prefaces themselves. In these early manuscripts the copying of the prefaces seems to have taken place as a separate exercise from the copying of the main text: in both cases the prose preface and the verse preface were apparently written on separate bifolia placed at the beginning of their books, and

29 See Kenneth Sisam, “An Old English Translation of a Letter from Wynfrith to Eadburga (A.D. 716–717) in Cotton MS. Otho C.I” and “Addendum: The Verses Prefixed to *Gregory’s Dialogues*” in his *Studies in the History of Old English Literature* (Oxford: 1953), 199–224 and 225–31.

30 See Ker, *Catalogue*, 236; and Sisam, “Addendum,” 226. Cf. Orton, “Deixis and the Untransferable Text,” 202–203.

31 See Winfried Rudolf, “The Addition and Use of Running Titles in Manuscripts Containing Old English,” in *Producing and Using English Manuscripts in the Post-Conquest Period*, ed. Elaine Treharne, Orietta Da Rold and Mary Swan, *New Medieval Literatures* 13 (Turnhout: 2013), 49–97.

the scribes who copied the prose preface were not the scribes of the main texts of their respective manuscripts.³² But there was more overlap than this might seem to suggest, since the scribe who wrote the main text of the Cotton manuscript also wrote the prose preface in the Hatton manuscript. Since neither preface ever circulated separately from the *Pastoral Care*, it seems likely that both were composed as frame pieces.³³ In line with Carolingian precedent, they may have been conceived as a pair.³⁴ Their clear purpose is to introduce and authorize the work. Both prefaces reflect Alfred's own authority as king and translator and the authority of the vernacular as a means of conveying learning.³⁵

The prose preface is written in epistolary form, prompted perhaps by Gregory's own preface which comprises a letter to his "dearest brother" John ("þu leofusta broður" in the OE version).³⁶ It begins with a brief formal salutation in the third person, after which the king's voice speaks throughout in the first person, explaining the process by which he came to his decision to make available translations of various important works from Latin into English. He tells us that he himself has translated the Latin *Regula Pastoralis* and now intends to send out a copy to each bishopric in his kingdom. The opening of the prose preface indicates that each bishop was to receive a personalized copy: "Ælfred cyning hateð gretan..." (with space for the name to be

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- 32 See Sisam, "The Publication of Alfred's Pastoral Care," 142–43; Simon Keynes, "The Power of the Written Word: Alfredian England 871–899," in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Reuter, 175–197, at 193–196; Carolin Schreiber, *King Alfred's Old English Translation of Pope Gregory the Great's Regula Pastoralis and its Cultural Context: A Study and Partial Edition According to All Surviving Manuscripts Based on Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 12* (Frankfurt-am-Main: 2003), 51–82; and Pratt, *Political Thought*, 180–85.
- 33 The prose preface has sometimes been viewed as a "circular letter" rather than a preface; see, for example, Francis P. Magoun, Jr., "Some Notes on King Alfred's Circular Letter on Educational Policy Addressed to His Bishops," *Mediaeval Studies* 10 (1948): 93–107. The argument for considering it as a preface has been most recently put by Godden, "Prologues and Epilogues," 448–449.
- 34 See Godden, "Prologues and Epilogues," 444–448.
- 35 See Stanton, *The Culture of Translation*, Chapter 2; Kathleen Davis, "Performance of Translation Theory in King Alfred's National Literary Programme," in *Manuscript, Narrative, Lexicon: Essays on Literary and Cultural Transmission in Honor of Whitney F. Bolton*, ed. Robert Boenig and Kathleen Davis (London: 2000), 149–170; Discenza, "Alfred's Verse Preface to the *Pastoral Care*"; and Susan Irvine, "English Literature in the Ninth Century," in *The Cambridge History of Early Medieval English Literature*, ed. Clare Lees (Cambridge: 2013), 209–231.
- 36 Sweet, 23. The Latin is "frater carissime" (*Sancti Gregorii Magni Regulae Pastoralis Liber*, in PL 77, col. 13A).

filled in).³⁷ Cotton Tiberius B. xi was apparently the master copy: the space for a name was left blank and a memorandum on the first leaf records that Plegmund, Wærferth and Swithulf have been given their copies.³⁸ Hatton 20 was the copy sent to Wærferth, as the words written (uniquely in this manuscript) at the top of the first page attest: “ÐEOS BOC SCEAL TO WIOGORA CEASTRE.”³⁹

The king’s first-person voice in the preface confers his royal authority on the translation which follows. But this voice, far from being aloof, emphasises the ways in which Alfred’s perspective connects to those of his bishops and the kingdom as a whole. It is used not only in the singular—for Alfred—but also in the plural for various groups ranging from Alfred and his bishops to the English people past and present.⁴⁰ The first-person voice also imagines another voice from the past, that of the clerics who rue their inability to understand the books that have been passed down to them:

Swelce hie cwæden: Ure ieldran, ða ðe ðas stowa ær hioldon, hie lufodon wisdom ond ðurh ðone hie begeaton welan ond us læfdon. Her mon mæg giet gesion hiora swæð, ac we him ne cunnon æfterspyrgan.⁴¹

The first-person voice at one point divides into two separate voices which converse with one another (recalling the dialogue form of the OE *Boethius* and *Soliloquies*):

Ða ic ða ðis eall gemunde, ða wundrade ic swiðe swiðe ðara godena wio-tona ðe giu wæron giond Angelcynn, ond ða bec eallæ befullan geliornod hæfdon, ðæt hie hiora ða nænne dæl noldon on hiora agen geðiode wendan. Ac ic ða sona eft me selfum andwyrde ond cwæð: Hie ne wendon ðætte æfre menn sceolden swæ reccelease weorðan ond sio lar swæ oðfeallan.⁴²

37 Henry Sweet (ed.), *King Alfred’s West Saxon Version of Gregory’s Pastoral Care*, EETS OS 45 (London: 1871; repr. 1958), 3: “King Alfred sends greetings to...”

38 Sweet, *King Alfred’s West Saxon Version*, xvi; Kenneth Sisam, “The Publication of Alfred’s Pastoral Care,” in his *Studies*, 140–147.

39 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 20, fol. 1 recto: “This book is to go to Worcester.”

40 See T.A. Shippey, “Wealth and Wisdom in King Alfred’s *Preface* to the Old English *Pastoral Care*,” *EHR* 94 (1979): 346–355, at 350.

41 Sweet, *King Alfred’s West Saxon Version*, 5: “As if they had said: Our ancestors, who formerly occupied these places, loved wisdom, and through it they obtained wealth and left it to us. Here their tracks can still be seen, but we do not know how to follow them.”

42 Sweet, *King Alfred’s West Saxon Version*, 5: “When I remembered all this, then I wondered very greatly at those good wise men who lived previously throughout England and who

Here an internal dialogue is created out of Alfred's thought process. Elsewhere, in addressing its recipient(s) as "you," the preface implies another set of voices, those of Wærferth ("Ond forðon ic ðe bebiode ðæt ðu do swæ ic geliefe ðæt ðu wille") and of the bishops more generally ("Forðy me ðyncð betre, gif iow swæ ðyncð").⁴³ The epistolary form may be conventional in prefaces, but the dramatic interplay of voices that it provokes in this case is startlingly innovative. It looks forward to the "Hierdeboc" itself, in which the authoritative voice of Gregory is conveyed (we are told) through the voice of the king.

In the verse preface to the OE *Pastoral Care*, the voice of the book itself speaks:

Dis ærendgewrit	Agustinus	
ofer sealtne sæ	suðan brohte	
iegbuendum,	swa hit ær fore	
adihtode	dryhtnes cempa,	
Rome papa.	Ryhtspell monig	5
Gregorius	gleawmod gindwod	
ðurh sefan snyttro,	searoðonca hord.	
Forðæm he monncynnes	mæst gestriende	
rodra wearde,	Romwara betest,	
monna modwelegost,	mærðum gefrægost.	10
Siððan min on Englisc	Ælfred kyning	
awende worda gehwelc	and me his writenum	
sende suð and norð;	heht him swelcra ma	
brengan bi ðære bisene,	ðæt he his biscepum	
sendan meahte,	forðæm hi his sume ðorfton	15
ða ðe Lædenspræce	læste cuðon. ⁴⁴	

had fully learned all the books, that they did not wish to translate any part of them into their own language. But then I straightaway answered myself again and said: They did not think that people would ever become so careless and the teaching so decline."

43 Sweet, *King Alfred's West Saxon Version*, 5, 7: "And therefore I bid you [singular] do as I believe you are willing...Therefore it seems better to me, if it seems so to you [plural]."

44 Irvine and Godden, *Old English Boethius with Verse Prologues and Epilogues*, 408–409: "Augustine brought this message from the south over the salt sea to the island dwellers, just as the Lord's champion, the pope at Rome, had previously composed it. The wise Gregory explored many true texts thoroughly through his mind's intelligence, his hoard of clever thoughts. Therefore he, best of Romans, most wealthy in mind amongst men, most renowned for his glorious deeds, won the greatest number of humankind for the guardian of heaven. Afterwards King Alfred translated every word of me into English and sent me

Alfred translated every word “of me,” the preface says, and sent “me” south and north to his scribes. The voice of the book complements the use of Alfred’s voice in the prose preface. Indeed, by awarding a first-person voice to the book, the verse preface seems to develop the focus on the book itself with which the prose preface ends: “Forðy ic wolde ðætte hie ealneg æt ðære stowe wæren, buton se biscep hie mid him habban wille oððe hio hwær to læne sie, oððe hwa oðre biwrite.”⁴⁵

The verse preface reinforces from its own perspective a number of the ideas in the prose preface. Both prefaces reflect in different ways on the past as a means of authorizing the production of the OE *Pastoral Care*. The prose preface shows that the translation project has its roots in the neglect of learning in the past, and also in the precedent offered by other literate cultures which transmitted learning through translation. In the verse preface it is the transmission of the book from past to present which is addressed, as the poet, speaking in the book’s voice, sweeps across times and locations, from Gregory the Great to Augustine to King Alfred and his bishops, from Rome “ofer sealtne sæ” (over the salt sea) to the “suð and norð” (south and north) of Alfred’s kingdom.

The two prefaces also throw different perspectives on wisdom and its links with wealth and war. In the prose preface Alfred recalls kings in the past, “hu him ða speow ægðer ge mid wige ge mid wisdom.”⁴⁶ The alliterative play on “wige” and “wisdom” is developed in the links between “wisdom” and “wela” (wealth) later in the preface. Whereas in the past, Alfred suggests, “ure iel-dran...lufodon wisdom ond ðurh ðone hie begeaton welan ond us læfdon,” a decline in learning means that “we habbað nu ægðer forlæten ge ðone welan ge ðone wisdom.”⁴⁷ At the end of the preface the “æstel” (or book marker) which Alfred pledges to place in each copy of the book acts as a physical embodiment of wisdom as wealth. In the verse preface, the links between war, wisdom and wealth are encapsulated in the figure of Gregory: the “gleawmod”

south and north to his scribes; he ordered them to produce more such copies according to the exemplar, so that he could send them to his bishops, because some of them who knew very little Latin needed it.”

45 Sweet, *King Alfred’s West Saxon Version*, 9: “Therefore I wish them always to remain at that place, unless the bishop wishes to take it with him, or it is lent out anywhere or anyone makes a copy from it.”

46 Sweet, *King Alfred’s West Saxon Version*, 3: “how they succeeded both in war and in wisdom.”

47 Sweet, *King Alfred’s West Saxon Version*, 5: “our ancestors loved wisdom and through it they obtained wealth and left it to us...therefore we have lost both the wealth and the wisdom.”

Gregory, as “dryhtnes cempa,” succeeds in war as well as wisdom; his “searoðonca hord” and his role as “monna modwelegost” linguistically reflect his association with wealth and wisdom. The verse preface, in setting Alfred in parallel with Gregory, reinforces the implication in the prose preface that Alfred is the means by which wisdom and wealth can be restored to his kingdom.⁴⁸

The verse epilogue to the OE *Pastoral Care*, like the prose and verse prefaces, seems to have circulated with the translation itself from an early stage, similarly prompted perhaps by Carolingian precedent.⁴⁹ Although, as Dobbie notes, “there is nothing in the metrical epilogue to connect it inescapably with the *Pastoral Care*,” its explicit reference to Gregory and the links in imagery and diction with both the Latin and Old English versions of the *Regula Pastoralis* seem to imply a close relationship.⁵⁰

The epilogue survives in two copies: in the earlier of the two, Hatton 20, the poem’s layout on the page, which sees it ultimately tapering to a point, draws attention to its role as an emblem of closure.⁵¹ Arguably the shape, in resembling that of water cascading into a container, also reflects the poem’s own imagery. The epilogue applies the metaphor of water flowing from a well and into watertight pitchers to the dissemination of God’s wisdom:

Dis is nu se wæterscipe ðe us wereda God
to frofre gehet foldbuendum.
He cwæð ðæt he wolde ðæt on worulde forð
of ðæm innoðum a libbendu
wætru fleowen ðe wel on hine

5

48 Nicole Guenther Discenza, “Alfred’s Verse Preface to the *Pastoral Care* and the Chain of Authority,” *Neophilologus* 85 (2001): 625–633, at 627.

49 Godden, “Prologues and Epilogues,” 444–448 and 466.

50 E.V.K. Dobbie (ed.), *The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems*, ASPP 6 (New York: 1942), cxii. See Neil D. Isaacs, *Structural Principles in Old English Poetry* (Knoxville: 1968), 83–89; William T. Whobrey, “King Alfred’s Metrical Epilogue to the *Pastoral Care*,” *JEGP* 90 (1991): 175–86; and J.E. Cross, “The Metrical Epilogue to the Old English Version of Gregory’s *Cura Pastoralis*,” *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 70 (1963): 381–386. Dekker, “King Alfred’s Translation,” 38–39, notes the similarity of idea to the introductory comments of Books I–IV of the OE *Dialogues*.

51 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 20, fol. 98 verso. For a facsimile edition of Hatton 20, see N.R. Ker (ed.), *The Pastoral Care*, EEMF 6 (Copenhagen: 1956). See also Peter J. Lucas, “The Metrical Epilogue to the Alfredian *Pastoral Care*: A Postscript from Junius,” *ASE* 24 (1996): 43–60. E.G. Stanley, “King Alfred’s Prefaces,” *The Review of English Studies* n.s. 39 (1988): 349–364, at 356, compares it to colophons in early printed books.

gelifden under lyfte.	Is hit lytel twoo	
ðæt ðæs wæterscipes	welsprynge is	
on hefonrice,	ðæt is halig gæst.	
Ðonan hine hlodan	halge and gecorene;	
siððan hine gierdon	ða ðe Gode herdon	10
ðurh halga bec	hider on eorðan	
geond manna mod	missenlice.	
Sume hine weriað	on gewitlocan,	
wisdomes stream,	welerum gehæftað,	
ðæt he on unnyt	ut ne tofloweð,	15
ac se wæl wunað	on weres breostum	
ðurh dryhtnes giefe	diop and stille.	
Sume hine lætað	ofer landscare	
riðum torinnan.	Nis ðæt rædlic ðing,	
gif swa hlutor wæter	hlud and undiop	20
tofloweð æfter feldum	oð hit to fenne werð.	
Ac hladað iow nu drincan,	nu iow dryhten geaf	
ðæt iow Gregorius	gegiered hafað	
to durum iowrum	dryhtnes welle.	
Fylle nu his fætels	se ðe fæstne hider	25
kylle brohte,	cume eft hræðe.	
Gif her ðegna hwelc	ðyrelne kylle	
brohte to ðys burnan,	bete hine georne,	
ðy læs he forsceade	scirost wætra,	
oððe him lifes drync	forloren weorðe. ⁵²	

52 Irvine and Godden, *Old English Boethius with Verse Prologues and Epilogues*, 410–413: “This is now the body of water which the God of hosts promised for the comfort of us as earth dwellers. He said that he wished ever-living waters to flow continually in the world from the hearts of those under the sky who fully believed in him. There is little doubt that the source of the body of water is in the kingdom of heaven, that is, the holy ghost. From there saints and the elect drew it; then they, being obedient to God, directed it by means of holy books here on earth in various ways through the minds of men. Some guard the stream of wisdom within their minds, keep it captive with their lips, so that it does not flow away useless, but the pool remains deep and still in the man’s breast through the Lord’s grace. Some let it run away over the land in small streams. It is not advisable for clear water thus to flow away loud and shallow across the plains until it becomes a marsh. But draw yourselves water to drink, now that the Lord has granted you that Gregory has directed the Lord’s stream to your doors. He who has brought here a watertight pitcher may now fill his vessel, and may come back quickly. If any man has brought here a leaky pitcher to this stream, let him repair it speedily, so that he may avoid spilling the clearest of waters or losing the drink of life.”

The first half-line of the poem, “Ðis is nu se wæterscipe,” links the epilogue with the work that has preceded it, with “se wæterscipe” (the body of water) representing the work itself.⁵³ Later in the epilogue, the poet seems to allude again to the role of Gregory’s work when he writes that it is “her...to ðys bur-nan” (here to this stream) that people should come to receive the water which is God’s wisdom. In its context the image of the filling of the watertight vessels may refer not only to the process of acquiring God’s wisdom via Gregory and (implicitly) Alfred, but also to the need to continue to produce books—including presumably copies of the OE *Pastoral Care* itself—of sufficient quality to ensure the reliable transmission of that wisdom. The work’s epilogue emphasizes the authority of Gregory, Alfred and the book itself as a means of conveying God’s wisdom.

The Prefaces and Epilogue to the OE *Boethius*

The OE *Boethius* was furnished with a prose and a verse preface. There is also arguably an epilogue, in the form of a prayer, in one manuscript. The complex transmission history of the OE *Boethius* is both informed and further complicated by its frame pieces. The work exists in two versions, one entirely in prose and the other in alternating verse and prose, with the verse parts of the latter based on the corresponding Old English prose.⁵⁴ The prose version, in its sole extant late-eleventh- or early-twelfth-century copy (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 180), has the prose preface and the closing prayer. The prosimetrical version, on the evidence of Franciscus Junius’s seventeenth-century transcript (the manuscript itself, London, BL, Cotton Otho A.vi, is badly damaged by fire), contained the same prose preface and also a verse preface; it has no epilogue.

The prose preface, occurring in both versions, claims that Alfred first translated the Latin text and then turned it into verse:

Ælfred kuning wæs wealhstod ðisse bec and hie of boclædene on Englisc wende swa hio nu is gedon. Hwylum he sette word be worde, hwylum

53 See Isaacs, *Structural Principles*, 84; and Earl, “King Alfred’s Talking Poems,” 96–98. Britt Mize, in “Manipulations of the Mind-as-Container Motif in *Beowulf*, *Homiletic Fragment II*, and Alfred’s *Metrical Epilogue to the Pastoral Care*,” *JEGP* 107 (2008): 25–56, sees “the *Pastoral Care* as being, in Alfred’s conception, only one instantiation of the heavenly wisdom which is properly the *wæterscipe*” (48).

54 Malcolm Godden and Susan Irvine (eds.), *The Old English Boethius: An Edition of the Old English Versions of Boethius’s De Consolatione Philosophiae*, 2 vols. (Oxford: 2009), I.44.

andgit of andgite, swa swa he hit þa sweotolost and andgitfullicast gereccan mihte for þam mistlicum and manigfealdum woruldbisgum þe hine oft ægðer ge on mode ge on lichoman bisgodan. Ða bisgu us sint swiþe earfoþprime þe on his dagum on þa ricu becoman þe he underfangen hæfde, and þeah ða he þas boc hæfde geleornode and of Lædene to Engliscum spelle gewende, þa geworhte he hi eft to leoðe swa swa heo nu gedon is; and nu bit and for Godes naman he halsað ælcne þara þe þas boc rædan lyste þæt he for hine gebidde, and him ne wite gif he hit rihtlicor ongite þonne he mihte, forþam þe ælc mon sceal be his andgites mæðe and be his æmettan sprecan þæt he sprecð and don þæt þæt he deþ.⁵⁵

The relationship between this preface and the prose version of the OE *Boethius* is a problematic one. It seems very likely, as has been argued elsewhere, that the preface is not original or at the very least is a composite work.⁵⁶ The second sentence of the preface is almost entirely made up of phrases occurring in the OE *Pastoral Care* preface and may represent a crude attempt to recreate an “Alfredian” style. The first part of the third sentence sounds as though it is written from the perspective of someone looking back on Alfred’s reign from afterwards, and the repetition of “swa heo nu gedon is” in the first and third sentences would seem to imply an allusion to two different versions of the OE *Boethius* within the one preface. If the first part of the third sentence (“Ða bisgu...nu gedon is”) were omitted, the preface could more plausibly act as an introduction to the prose version of the OE *Boethius*.⁵⁷ It remains possible,

55 Godden and Irvine, *Old English Boethius*, I.239. Trans. *ibid.* II.1: “King Alfred was the translator of this book, and turned it from Latin into English, as it is now done. Sometimes he set it down word for word, sometimes sense for sense, as he could most clearly and intelligibly explain it, on account of the various and multiple worldly troubles which often busied him in mind and body. It is hard for us to count the troubles which in his time came upon the kingdoms which he had received, and yet when he had learnt this book and turned it from Latin into English discourse, he then turned it again into verse, as it is now done. And now he prays and beseeches, in God’s name, everyone who takes pleasure in reading this book to pray for him, and not to blame him if he [the reader] understands it more correctly than he was able to; for everyone must speak what he speaks and do what he does according to the power of his understanding and his leisure.”

56 See Bill Griffiths (ed.), *Alfred’s Metres of Boethius*, Anglo-Saxon Books (Pinner: 1991, rev.ed. 1994), 39–41; Malcolm Godden, “Did King Alfred Write Anything?,” *Medium Ævum* 76 (2007): 1–23, at 16–17; and Nicole Guenther Discenza, “Alfred the Great and the Anonymous Prose Proem to the *Boethius*,” *JEGP* 107 (2008): 57–76.

57 The manuscript evidence, intriguingly, may support the idea that the preface is a composite work. An anomalously large initial thorn which marks the beginning of this

however, that the prose version of the OE *Boethius* originally had a different preface or no preface at all. If the prose preface is not a product of Alfred's circle, then ironically through its very lack of "originality" it attests to Alfred's power as king and translator to confer authority on a literary work.

The prosimetrical version of the OE *Boethius* contains, in addition to the prose preface discussed above, a short verse preface, whose only surviving copy is in Junius' seventeenth-century transcript:

Ðus Ælfred us ealdspell reahte,
 cyning Westsexna, cræft meldode,
 leoðwyrhta list. Him wæs lust micel
 ðæt he ðiossum leodum leoð spellode,
 monnum myrgen, mislice cwidas, 5
 þy læs ælinge ut adrife
 selflicne secg, þonne he swelces lyt
 gymð for his gilpe. Ic sceal giet sprecan,
 fon on fitte, folccuðne ræd
 hæleðum secgean. Hliste se þe wille.⁵⁸ 10

The verse preface invests the prosimetrical work with all the authority that Alfred's name can convey. Moreover it seems to acknowledge and exploit its relationship to the work it introduces. In its context as preface to a work which alternates between prose and verse, the poem is intriguingly self-conscious about its status as verse. Like the verse preface to the *Pastoral Care*, it may speak out in the voice of the poem or the book as a whole: "Ic sceal giet spre-can, / fon on fitte, folccuðne ræd / hæleðum secgean" (lines 8–10).⁵⁹ It alludes

sentence in Bodley 180 (fol. 1r) could conceivably reflect an interpolation at some stage in transmission; see also Griffiths, *Alfred's Metres of Boethius*, 40–41. The preface remains problematic, however, even without this sentence; see Discenza, "Alfred the Great and the Anonymous Prose Proem," who notes that "removing [this sentence] does little to solve the problems posed by the Proem as a whole" (73).

58 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 12. The text is from Godden and Irvine, *Old English Boethius*, 1.384: "Thus Alfred, king of the West Saxons, maker of verse, told us old stories, revealed his craft, his skill. He greatly desired to tell verse to this people, various discourses, as a joy to men, lest weariness drive away the self-regarding man, when he little cares for this because of his pride. I shall speak further, put well-known counsel into poetry, announce it to men. Listen he who will!"

59 See Earl, "King Alfred's Talking Poems." Frantzen, "The Form and Function of the Preface," ascribes it to the voice of the king (134); and O'Brien O'Keeffe, "Listening to the Scenes of Reading," imagines it as "the authoritative voice of the reader" reciting the work (35).

explicitly to poetry in the words “leoðwyrhta,” “leoð,” and “fitte,” and uses vocabulary associated with the Old English poetic tradition (“fitte” again, and “hæleðum”). The attention to the poetic form here may reflect the preponderance of poetry in the opening part of the prosimetrical OE *Boethius* (Metres 1 and 2 follow on immediately from the verse preface).⁶⁰ At the same time as being primarily about poetry, however, the preface alerts its audience—the “us” in line 1 and the “ðiossum leodum” in line 4—to the way in which poetry is intertwined with prose in the work as a whole. Verse is “offered as an antidote to the tedium of prose,” as James Earl notes, though only the self-regarding man needs such an antidote.⁶¹ Ironically the word “ælinge” (weariness or tedium) is a word normally found in a prose context, not a poetic one. The phrase “mislice cwidas” may hint at the different discourses of prose and verse.⁶² Most curious, perhaps, is the half-line “leoð spellode.” In the OE *Boethius*, the author elsewhere takes care to distinguish semantically between reciting verse (for which the verb “sigan” is used) and speaking prose (for which the verb “spellian” is used). The collocation of “spellian” with “leoð” in line 4b of the verse preface may therefore reflect the juxtaposition of verse and prose in the work itself. This preface offers a rare insight into contemporary attitudes to verse and prose, and alerts its audience to ways of reading the prosimetrical work it accompanies.

Neither version of the OE *Boethius* seems originally to have had an epilogue. But the prose version of the OE *Boethius* did acquire an epilogue in the course of transmission. This closing prayer is addressed to God (it begins “Drihten ælmihtiga God”) and is written in an unspecified first-person voice (“ic bidde þe”).⁶³ The prayer, as Janet Bately has argued, “does not belong to the *Boethius* and does not represent Alfred’s work.”⁶⁴ Thomas Bredehoft characterizes it as an example of late Old English verse, probably composed in the eleventh century.⁶⁵ Opinions have differed over whether the prayer is written in the same hand as that of the main text (Sedgfield arguing for different hands, Ker that they are identical).⁶⁶ It occurs only in the later all-prose copy of the OE

60 See M.R. Godden, “Editing Old English and the Problem of Alfred’s *Boethius*,” in *The Editing of Old English: Papers from the 1990 Manchester Conference*, ed. D.G. Scragg and Paul E. Szarmach (Cambridge: 1994), 163–76, at 166.

61 Earl, “King Alfred’s Talking Poems,” 90.

62 See Frantzen, “The Form and Function of the Preface,” 134.

63 The prayer has been most recently printed by Bredehoft, *Authors, Audiences*, 213–214. For a translation, see K&L, 137.

64 Bately, “The Alfredian Canon Revisited,” 118.

65 Bredehoft, *Authors, Audiences*, 175–179.

66 Walter John Sedgfield (ed.), *King Alfred’s Old English Version of Boethius De Consolatione Philosophiae* (Oxford: 1899), xv; Ker, *Catalogue*, 359.

Boethius, assuming the role of an epilogue in that context.⁶⁷ By a process of accretion it has become part of the frame to the text. This raises intriguing questions about the speaking voice: is “ic” to be understood as the voice of the original author Boethius, or of the Old English translator, or of the scribe? The last would suggest that the prayer might be linked to the tradition of the scribal colophon, and in this it bears comparison, as we shall see, to the epilogue to the copy of the OE *Bede* in CCCC 41.⁶⁸

The Prefaces to the OE *Soliloquies* and the OE *Laws*

The prefaces to the OE *Laws* and *Soliloquies*, as far as it is possible to tell, circulated from an early stage with the works they introduced. In the case of the OE *Soliloquies* only one copy of the preface (and of the whole work) survives.⁶⁹ There seems no reason to doubt its originality, despite the late-twelfth-century date of the only surviving copy (London, BL, Cotton Vitellius A.xv), in which the opening words of the preface seem to have been lost.⁷⁰ The preface is written in an unidentified first-person voice, traditionally assumed to be that of Alfred, whose role in the composition of the OE *Soliloquies* is asserted in a short statement at the end of Book III of the work: “Hær endiað þa cwidas þe Ælfred kining alæs of þære bec þe we hatað on [Ledene *de uidendo deo* and on Englisc *be godes ansyne*].”⁷¹ Royal power and the textual authority of a Latin source are being harnessed to secure authority for the vernacular work.

The preface to the OE *Soliloquies*, like the prose preface to the OE *Pastoral Care*, highlights Alfred’s prominent role in the production of the translation itself. This preface, however, focuses on the process of compilation rather than translation. Although *compilatio* was traditionally used as a metaphor for

67 Its absence from London, BL, Cotton Otho A.VI is noted by Junius. See Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 12, fol. 89v: “cujus ne minimum quidem vestigium in Cottoniano codice deprehendas.”

68 Bredehoft, *Authors, Audiences*, 178–179.

69 For the *Soliloquies* and its preface, see also in this volume Paul E. Szarmach, Chapter 8, “Augustine’s *Soliloquia* in Old English.”

70 Despite the presence of an ornamental capital ‘G’ on *Gaderode*, the use of *þonne* in the opening phrase would seem to indicate that some material is missing.

71 T.A. Carnicelli (ed.), *King Alfred’s Version of St. Augustine’s “Soliloquies”* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1969), 97 (with textual reconstruction in square brackets): “Here end the sayings which King Alfred selected from the book which is called in [Latin *De Videndo Deo* and in English *On Seeing God*].”

composition,⁷² the focus in this preface on the role of selecting material rather than translating it may bring us closer to the picture of Alfred as compiler and commissioner of writings as depicted in the preface to the OE *Laws*.

The *Soliloquies* preface opens with an extended metaphor of gathering wood from the forest to build houses, used to describe the process of collecting excerpts from Latin authors to construct one's own literary works for the purpose of spiritual improvement. One of the most striking features of the opening of this preface is its piling-up of technical vocabulary, including a number of *hapax legomena*, to emphasise the practical application of the metaphor:

Gaderode me þonne kigclas and stuþansceaftas, and lohsceaftas and hylfa to ælcum þara tola þe ic mid wircan cuðe, and bohtimbru and bolttimbru, and, to ælcum þara weorca þe ic wyrcan cuðe, þa wlitegostan treowo be þam dele ðe ic aberan mehte.⁷³

"Kigclas," "lohsceaftas," "bohtimbru" and "bolttimbru" do not occur elsewhere in Old English, and "stuþansceaftas" appears only here and in another usage a bit further on in this same preface.⁷⁴ The recondite specialist vocabulary draws attention to the process of construction by which a house is built, even as, self-referentially through the preface itself, the author creates a structural frame for his own literary work. The use of the metaphor of house-building to denote the acquisition of wisdom from the patristic fathers, moreover, draws attention to the book itself as a dwelling-place for wisdom.⁷⁵

The preface to the OE *Soliloquies* draws parallels between the earthly and spiritual, anticipating the subsequent dialogue between "Gesceadwisnes" (Reason) and "Mod" (Mind). So the author of the preface both advises others ("ic lære") and is himself instructed by God ("se þe me lærde").⁷⁶ He alludes three times to an earthly home ("ham") towards which his wood-gathering efforts are directed, anticipating the idea of the eternal home ("ecan hame")

72 Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, 435–37.

73 Carnicelli, *King Alfred's Version*, 47. Trans. K&L, 138: "I then gathered for myself staves and props and tie-shafts, and handles for each of the tools that I knew how to work with, and cross-bars and beams, and, for each of the structures which I knew how to build, the finest timbers I could carry."

74 See *The Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus*, ed. A. di Paolo Healey (Toronto: 2005) <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/o/oec/>.

75 See also Susan Irvine, "Fragments of Boethius: The Reconstruction of the Cotton Manuscript of the Alfredian Text," *ASE* 34 (2005): 169–181, at 179–181.

76 Carnicelli, *King Alfred's Version*, 47.6–7 and 47.12.

which prevails later in the preface.⁷⁷ The kindness of an earthly lord (“þurh his hlaforðes miltse”) who bestows “bocland” (bookland) is set beside God’s generosity (“swa gedo se weliga gifola”) in providing both an earthly and an eternal home.⁷⁸ The eternal home, the preface tells us, can be reached more easily through the writings of Augustine, Gregory and Jerome. By citing these names the author of the preface brings to bear their implicit authority on his own literary enterprise. The OE *Soliloquies*, the author of its preface suggests, participates in a process of literary construction whose ultimate goal is an eternal home.

The preface to the OE *Laws* is also written in Alfred’s first-person voice, although this becomes apparent only as it comes to a close. The preface begins by setting the laws within a broad context ranging from Old Testament law-giving to the English legal system.⁷⁹ It provides translations of Mosaic Law based on the Book of Exodus, an explanation of how Old Testament law was revised to make it appropriate in a Christian context (with a particular focus on the “Golden Rule” of Matth. vii.12), and a consideration of precedents for law-giving up to Alfred’s own time. The biblical and historical precedents cited and discussed by the preface establish the authority of the law-code from both spiritual and secular perspectives.

In its provision of a wide-ranging historical review as context for a political initiative, the *Laws* preface can be compared to the prose preface to the OE *Pastoral Care*. And like the latter too, the *Laws* preface concludes by outlining Alfred’s own part in making available this body of work:

Ic ða Ælfred cyning þas togædere gegaderode ond awritan het monege þara þe ure foregengan heoldon, ða ðe me licodon; ond manege þara þe me ne licodon ic awarep mid minra witena geðeahhte, ond on oðre wisan bebead to healdanne. Forðam ic ne dorste geðristlæcan þara minra awuht fela on gewrit settan, forðam me wæs uncuð, hwæt þæs ðam lician wolde ðe æfter us wæren. Ac ða ðe ic gemette awðer oððe on Ines dæge, mines mæges, oððe on Offan Mercna cyninges oððe on Æþelbryhtes, þe ærest fulluhte onfeng on Angelcynne, þa ðe me ryhtoste ðuhton, ic þa her on gegaderode, ond þa oðre forlet.

77 Carnicelli, *King Alfred’s Version*, 47.4, 5, 6, and 14; 48.2 and 10. See also Milton McC. Gatch, “King Alfred’s Version of Augustine’s *Soliloquia*: Some Suggestions on Its Rationale and Unity,” *Studies in Earlier Old English Prose*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: 1986): 17–45, esp. 23–25.

78 Carnicelli, *King Alfred’s Version*, 48.9–10: “with his lord’s help” and “may the bounteous benefactor so grant.” On bookland, see K&L, 308–309.

79 On the Carolingian precedents for the preface, see Pratt, *Political Thought*, 222–232.

Ic ða Ælfred Westseaxna cyning eallum minum witum þas geeowde,
 ond hie ða cwædon, þæt him þæt licode eallum to healdanne.⁸⁰

Alfred's own name appears here for the first time, delayed perhaps to avoid any distraction from the preface's focus on divine law-giving. Its repetition and syntactically prominent position forcefully impose the stamp of royal authority on the production of the *Laws*. The authority implicit in historical tradition is conferred too through the list of kings from the past whose laws have been incorporated into Alfred's code. As its final validation, the preface records of the last-mentioned royal law-maker, Æthelbert, that he was the first baptised amongst English kings. This explicitly connects the biblical tradition of law-making, the subject of the earlier part of the preface, with more recent English legislators, allowing the OE *Laws* to draw power from both.

The Epilogue to the OE *Bede* in CCCC 41

CCCC MS 41, a copy of the OE *Bede* made in the first half of the eleventh century, contains as its epilogue a fascinating short poem which is neither based on the source nor found in any other copies of this work:

Bidde ic eac æghwylcne mann,
 bregorices weard þe þas boc ræde
 and þa bredu befo, fira aldor,
 þæt gefyrðrige þone writre wynsumum cræfte
 þe ðas boc awrat bam handum twam, 5
 þæt he mote manega gyt mundum synum
 geendigan his aldre to willan;
 and him þæs geunne se ðe ah ealles geweald,

80 Felix Liebermann (ed.), *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, 3 vols. (Halle: 1903–16), I.46 (with “ond” for “7”): “Then I, King Alfred, gathered these (laws) together, and commanded to be written many of those that I liked of the ones that our predecessors observed, and many of the ones that I did not like I rejected in consultation with my councillors, and ordered them to be observed in a different way. For I did not dare to presume to set down in writing many of my own ones at all, because I did not know what those who were to come after us would like. But those which I found which seemed most just to me, either from the time of Ine, my kinsman, or Offa, king of the Mercians, or Æthelberht who first received baptism among the English, I collected those here, and left out the others. Then I Alfred, king of the West Saxons, showed these to all my councillors, and they then said that it pleased them all to observe them.”

rodera waldend, þæt he on riht mote
 oð his daga ende drihten herigan. 10
 Amen. Geweorþe þæt.⁸¹

In its manuscript context this verse epilogue follows two prose petitions, both of which have Bede's work as their source. Fred Robinson has argued that the epilogue should be read as "the third part of a tripartite valediction," in which the author asks successively for the support of God, his readers, and, here, powerful rulers.⁸² In Robinson's view, the poet is emulating the previous two petitions by writing in the voice of Bede. There seems no need, however, to deny the scribe his voice in this poem which focuses so firmly on the actual physical volume which the reader is holding. The poem fits well into the tradition of the scribal colophon, with the scribe particularly alert to the way in which his addition builds on Bede's own petitions.⁸³ In the emphatic repetition of "ðas boc" and reference to the book's physical composition ("þa bredu"), the poet may also have in mind the poetic tradition of the book speaking: "bidde ic" in the context of the poem could refer to the scribe, author, or book itself. Through the use of poetry rather than prose, moreover, the epilogue draws attention to its composition in the vernacular: its vocabulary and techniques are those of the Old English poetic tradition. In particular we might note the way in which words meaning "ruler" are used, sometimes ambiguously, to allude to both an earthly lord and God: in line 7, for example, does "his aldre to willan" refer to what his king wants, or God, or indeed both? The OE *Bede* as a whole, in the words of Discenza, "supplant[s] the Latin source and provides a means of access to their own history...to Anglo-Saxons who did not know Latin,"⁸⁴ and this function of the work is reinforced and enhanced by the presence of an Old English poem as an epilogue in CCCC 41.

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- 81 Irvine and Godden, *Old English Boethius with Verse Prologues and Epilogues*, 414–415: "I too pray to every person, to every guardian of a kingdom and lord of men who reads this book and holds the boards, that he support with his own sweet skill the scribe who wrote this book with his two hands so that he may complete many more with his hands in accordance with his lord's desire; and may he who controls everything, the ruler of heaven, grant him that he may rightly praise the Lord until the end of his days. Amen. So be it."
- 82 Fred Robinson, "Bede's' Envoi to the Old English *History*: An Experiment in Editing," in his *The Editing of Old English* (Oxford: 1994), 167–179, at 168 and 171. See also Fred C. Robinson, "Old English Literature in its Most Immediate Context," in *Old English Literature in Context: Ten Essays*, ed. John D. Niles (Cambridge: 1980), 11–29.
- 83 The phrase "bidde ic eac" in line 1, for example, echoes the openings of the two prose petitions: "And ic bidde ðe" and "eac þonne ic eaðmodlice bidde" (Robinson, "Bede's' Envoi," 174).
- 84 Nicole Guenther Discenza, "The Old English *Bede* and the Construction of Anglo-Saxon Authority," *ASE* 31 (2002): 69–80, at 80.

Conclusion

In reflecting on the role played by Alfredian prefaces and epilogues it might be useful to think in terms of literary theorist Gérard Genette's concept of "paratext," that is, "what enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers."⁸⁵ The paratext, he argues, is to be perceived not as a sealed border but rather a threshold, "a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of *transaction*."⁸⁶ The elements within a published work that accompany the text (more specifically termed "peritext"), such as the author's name, the title, the preface or introduction, and illustrations, all belong to this textual "vestibule." Though Genette's main subject is the printed book, his concept of paratext helps to make sense of the interactive relationship between the Alfredian prefaces and epilogues and the works they frame. These prefaces and epilogues do indeed act as a kind of meeting-point between text and reader, situated on the text's periphery but shaping readers' interpretations. Genette excludes from paratext anything for which the author or associate (such as the publisher) is not responsible.⁸⁷ Such a monopoly is credible within the realm of printed books. But prefaces and epilogues function very differently in a manuscript culture, where the notion of "author" is so elusive and where the text reinvents itself in every copy made. In a context where "authorial" and "text" are such nebulous terms, prefaces and epilogues can be exploited creatively within manuscripts to influence how works are read by different audiences in the course of their transmission. This creative exploitation is evident in the varying contexts and functions for the Alfredian examples. The prefaces and epilogues examined in this chapter are an extraordinarily significant group of texts for our knowledge and understanding of King Alfred and the works associated with his educational programme. They contribute to our sense of the powerful presence of Alfred himself in the development of a tradition of writing in English, through their determination to associate the works with the king as author or commissioner. They shed light on the way in which different voices might be exploited to convey a variety of ideas and perspectives. These voices might find expression in verse or prose, imitating or contrasting with the verse or prose of the main work. They might take a suppliant or an authoritative stance, or vary between the two. They might speak from the point of view of the author, or scribe, or the book itself, or any combination

85 Paratext can include elements both within the book (peritext) and outside the book (epitext); see Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: 1997), 4–5.

86 Genette, *Paratexts*, 2.

87 Genette, *Paratexts*, 9.

of these. Finally, these prefaces and epilogues draw to our attention the need to take full account of the fluid manuscript culture to which they belong. Whether or not they are “authorial” or “original,” they are an integral part of the on-going process of textual presentation. These framing texts offer us a rare insight into how readers and writers contributed to and engaged with vernacular literary tradition both within and well beyond the Alfredian era.

Searoðonca Hord

Alfred's Translation of Gregory the Great's Regula Pastoralis

Carolyn Schreiber

Few texts are more familiar to students of Old English than the Prose Preface King Alfred wrote for his translation of Gregory's *Regula Pastoralis*. The document is the most important historical source for Alfred's major programme of educational reform and has therefore been the subject of numerous close readings. By contrast, the Latin text and the Old English translation itself—best known under the title *Pastoral Care*—have received surprisingly little scholarly attention, although the latter survives in no less than six Anglo-Saxon manuscripts.

This chapter will therefore focus on these aspects: the first section summarizes the earlier Anglo-Saxon and especially Continental reception of the Latin *Regula pastoralis* and the state of research on the Latin text, thus putting the Old English translation in historical perspective. The section on the *Pastoral Care* begins with a survey of the surviving manuscripts and their relation, followed by an analysis of translation techniques, which reveals the author's pragmatic, yet self-confident approach and contributes to the subsequent discussion of the intended audience. The linguistic status of the body of the translation is then summarized briefly, which gives us valuable hints at the cultural climate during Alfred's reign and leads to the question of authorship. The chapter concludes with an outlook on the reception of the *Pastoral Care* in late Anglo-Saxon England. This overview will allow us to evaluate the profound influence that Gregory's work had on Alfred's political and ethical thought: The *Regula pastoralis* must be understood as the ultimate inspiration for Alfred's plans for cultural and spiritual reform.

The Early Reception of Gregory's *Regula Pastoralis*

Pope Gregory the Great's *Regula Pastoralis* or "Book of Pastoral Rule" was issued at the beginning of his episcopate (590–604), and is addressed probably to John, bishop of Ravenna, in reply to a letter received by him. Its subject is the office of episcopacy, and the definition of ethical norms for it. The duties of preaching and spiritual guidance of souls are treated prominently, but also the exercise of worldly discipline, which reflects the political situation of the

Roman bishop in the aftermath of the Langobard invasions.¹ In the first part of his work (Chaps. 1–11), Gregory stresses the importance of the office and the necessity of a special preparation for it. In the second (Chaps. 12–22), he outlines the qualities of the ideal spiritual leader and the way of life befitting him. The most important and longest part is the third (Chaps. 23–64). In 41 chapters, it deals with the main task of the *rector*, namely the most effective way of preaching and of adapting his teaching to the different needs of his hearers, which arise from their respective faults and virtues.² These chapters are concerned with contrasting pairs of subordinates for the admonition of whom Gregory gives finely calibrated pedagogical and psychological advice. The book ends with an urgent warning to those in power to maintain their humility to keep them from pride, and is framed by a short prologue and epilogue in the form of a letter to the above-mentioned addressee, John.³

The *Regula pastoralis* was disseminated immediately in all parts of the civilized world.⁴ Since the book had been completed some years before the first missionaries sent by Gregory reached England, it is possible that Augustine of Canterbury and his companions brought with them the *Regula pastoralis*.⁵ The earliest quotations in surviving Anglo-Latin texts, those in Aldhelm's prose *De uirginitate*, and in the *Vita Antiquissima Gregorii*, date from the late seventh and early eighth century.⁶ Bede (d. 735) draws upon the work in his biblical

- 1 On the historical context, see Silke Floryszczak, *Die Regula Pastoralis Gregors des Großen: Studien zu Text, kirchenpolitischer Bedeutung und Rezeption in der Karolingerzeit* (Tübingen: 2005), 236–252; Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, “Gregorio Magno: Roma, Bisanzio, Europa,” in *Gregorio Magno e l'invenzione del Medioevo*, ed. Luigi G. Ricci (Florence: 2006), 11–26; and Stefano Gasparri, “La situazione storica al tempo di Gregorio Magno,” *ibidem*, 27–40.
- 2 See R.A. Markus, “Gregory the Great's *rector* and his Genesis,” in *Grégoire le Grand: Colloques Internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*, ed. J.R. Fontaine, R. Gillet, S. Pellistrandi (Paris: 1986), 137–146 and Floryszczak, *Regula Pastoralis*, 188–197.
- 3 See Bruno Judic, “Structure et Fonction de la *Regula Pastoralis*,” in *Grégoire le Grand*, 410–414, and Floryszczak, *Regula Pastoralis*, 111–177.
- 4 See Judic, “Introduction,” in *Grégoire le Grand, Règle Pastorale*, ed. Bruno Judic, Floribert Rommel, Charles Morel, Sources Chrétiennes 381, 382 (Paris: 1992) [=RP], vol. 1, 15–102, at 88–102; Eligius Dekkers, *Clavis Patrum Latinorum*, 3rd. ed. Corpus Christianorum (Steenbrügge: 1995), no. 1718; and Rolf H. Bremmer, Jr., Kees Dekker, and David F. Johnson (eds.), *Rome and the North: The Early Reception of Gregory the Great in Germanic Europe, Mediaevalia Groningana 4* (Paris: 2001).
- 5 It is stated at beginning of the Verse preface that Augustine brought the the *Regula pastoralis* to England.
- 6 For the prose *De uirginitate*, see Rudolf Ehwald (ed.), *Aldelmi Opera*, MGH Auctorum Antiquissimorum Tomus XV (Berlin: 1919), 322 and cf. RP 540.88. For *Vita Antiquissima*

commentaries and sums up its contents in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*.⁷ He also recommends the book in a letter to Ecgbert of York, where his ideals of a reform of the Northumbrian Church are clearly influenced by the *Regula pastoralis*.⁸

An important period in the reception history of the work is the Carolingian renaissance. At its outset, in 747, Boniface, the English missionary and Archbishop of Mainz, wrote to Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, to draw attention to certain malpractices in England. As a remedy, he recommended the *Regula pastoralis* as an effective instrument in a reform of the English Church.⁹ Apparently his criticism was taken seriously: A now burnt manuscript, London, BL, Cotton Otho A. i, once contained a collection of texts assembled in “a concerted programme of secular and ecclesiastical reform, orchestrated by Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the King of the Mercians,” among them the above-mentioned letter by Boniface, the canons issued at the 747 synod of Clofesho, and an abridged version of the *Regula pastoralis*.¹⁰

Another Anglo-Saxon scholar on the Continent, Alcuin of York, mastermind of the reform in Charlemagne's time, head of the palace school and later abbot of Tours (d. 804), was a fervent promoter of the *Regula pastoralis*. He recommends it in several of his letters, even advising Archbishop Eanbald II of York always to have the book with him.¹¹ Alcuin considered it a useful manual on preaching, but also a guide for moral conduct, a *speculum* for bishops. The influence of the *Regula pastoralis* is also evident in Alcuin's mirrors for secular magnates, for example *De uirtutibus et uitiis*, written for Count Wido.¹²

Gregorii, see B. Colgrave, ed. and trans., *The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great, by an Anonymous Monk of Whitby* (Cambridge: 1968), 135–136 and 164–165, nn. 130, 134 and 135.

7 See Judic, “Introduction,” 91–92, for commentaries. Bertram Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors (eds.), *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Oxford Medieval Texts (1969; repr. with corrections Oxford: 1991), 194.

8 Charles Plummer (ed.), *Venerabilis Baedae Opera Historica*, 2 vols. (Oxford: 1896), vol. 1, 406 and Dorothy Whitelock (ed. and trans.), *EHD c. 500–1042*, 2nd. ed. (London: 1979), 736. See David Pratt, *The Political Thought of King Alfred the Great*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Fourth series, 67 (Cambridge: 2007), 139–141.

9 Ed. E. Dümmmler, “VI. Bonifatii et Lulli Epistolae,” in *Epistolae Merowingici et Karolini Aevi*, MGH Epistolarum Tomus III (Berlin: 1892), 215–433, at 354.

10 Simon Keynes, “Cotton Otho A.i,” *BL Journal* 22 (1996): 113–160, at 135.

11 Letters ed. E. Dümmmler, *Epistolae Karolini Aevi II*, MGH Epistolarum Tomus IV (Berlin: 1895), 182, 348, 166 and 171. On Alcuin's plans for a reform of the Anglo-Saxon church, see S. Coates, “The Bishop as Benefactor and Civic Patron: Alcuin, York, and Episcopal Authority in Anglo-Saxon England,” *Speculum* 71 (1996): 529–558.

12 See Judic, “Introduction,” 92–95 and Floryszczak, *Regula Pastoralis*, 354–59.

Perhaps because of this double function, the *Regula pastoralis* became one of the central books of the Carolingian reform, and its importance approached that of the Bible and Canons: it is declared essential reading for bishops at the council of Frankfurt (795), and in the capitularies of 802 and 805.¹³ Each of the reform councils of 813 emphasized the importance of the text, and citations at the councils of Paris (829) and Aachen (836) confirm its role as mirror for the life befitting a bishop.¹⁴ The *Regula pastoralis* was also recommended as essential reading for priests.¹⁵

Archbishop Hincmar of Reims (d. 882), the leading ecclesiastical figure in the West Frankish kingdom of Charles the Bald and his successors, was especially energetic in promoting the dissemination of the text in the later ninth century. He institutionalized the reading of the *Regula pastoralis* in his new procedures for the inauguration of suffragan bishops and used it himself in the cross-examination with which to prove a candidate's suitability for office.¹⁶ The work is also a prominent source for Hincmar's mirrors for princes, namely *De regis persona et regis ministerio*; *De cauendis uitii et uirtutibus exercendis*, addressed to Charles the Bald; and *De ordine palatii* for Carloman, son of Louis III, written on the occasion of his accession to the throne of Western Francia in 882.¹⁷ Grimbald of Saint-Bertin, who had been sent by Archbishop Fulk of Rheims (d. 900), Hincmar's successor, in reply to a letter in which King Alfred had asked for help "to increase the dignity of the ecclesiastical order with spiritual weapons," must have considered the *Regula pastoralis* an indispensable instrument for his task.¹⁸ It is highly probable that he also recommended

13 See Judic, "Introduction," 95, n. 1 for further references.

14 I. e. the councils of Rheims, Mainz, Chalons-sur-Saône and Tours. The texts are edited by Werminghoff, *MGH Concilia*, Tomus I, nos. 35–38.

15 See Judic, "Introduction," 98.

16 See Devisse, *Hincmar Archevêque de Reims 845–882*, 3 vols. (Geneva: 1975–76), vol. 2, 856–861, Judic, "Introduction," 99 and n. 3, and Pratt, *Political Thought*, 144–145, with further references.

17 See Floryszczak, *Regula Pastoralis*, 383–396.

18 Philip Grierson, "Grimbald of St. Bertin's," *EHR* 55 (1940): 529–561; Janet Bately, "Grimbald of St Bertin's," *Medium Aevum* 35 (1966): 1–10; Gerhard Schneider, *Erzbischof Fulco von Reims (883–900) und das Frankenreich*, Münchener Beiträge zur Mediävistik und Renaissanceforschung 14 (Munich: 1973). The quotation is from K&L. The Latin text is edited in Dorothy Whitelock, M. Brett and C.N.L. Brooke, ed., *Councils & Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church*, vol. 1: A.D. 871–1204, Part 1: 871–1066 (Oxford: 1981), 6–12. On Fulk's letter, see Janet L. Nelson, "...sicut olim gens Francorum...nunc gens Anglorum": Fulk's Letter to Alfred Revisited," in *Alfred the Wise*, ed. J. Roberts, J.L. Nelson, with M. Godden (Cambridge: 1997), 135–44, at 136, n. 7.

the text as a moral guide to his new lord, following contemporary Frankish practice.

Textual Recensions of the Latin *Regula Pastoralis*

The vast dissemination of the text in early medieval Europe is mirrored in a substantial number of surviving manuscripts written in England or in continental centres under English influence.¹⁹ Thirteen pre-Conquest manuscripts are preserved; to these can be added two Norman manuscripts and a Welsh fragment which seem to have reached England before A.D. 1100.²⁰

An important witness for the earliest textual history of the *Regula pastoralis* is preserved as Troyes, Médiathèque de l'Agglomération Troyenne (*olim*: Bibliothèque Municipale), MS 504, which probably originated in the papal scriptorium at end of the sixth century or the beginning of the seventh.²¹ This manuscript contains numerous alterations, corrections, and marginal insertions in a contemporary hand, which suggest that an earlier version was revised by the author. Such revision processes are attested for several of Gregory's works; the passages most frequently concerned are quotations from the Bible, which were corrected to Jerome's vulgate version.²² But also the preliminary edition of the *Regula pastoralis* as found in Troyes 504 was apparently circulated and is preserved in later Latin manuscripts.

Even though no comprehensive study of the Latin text tradition has been undertaken, it has been suggested that the Old English translation as well as English post-Viking age manuscripts are based on the unrevised version of the Latin text, whereas earlier English manuscripts are influenced by both recensions.²³ This transmission history could be explained by a new importation of

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- 19 See Richard Clement, "A Handlist of Manuscripts Containing Gregory's *Regula Pastoralis*," *Manuscripta* 28 (1984): 33–44.
 - 20 See Carolin Schreiber, *King Alfred's Old English Translation of Pope Gregory the Great's Regula Pastoralis and its Cultural Context*, Münchener Universitäts-Schriften: Texte und Untersuchungen zur Englischen Philologie 25 (Frankfurt am Main, 2003), 23–25.
 - 21 E.A. Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores: A Paleographical Guide to Latin Manuscripts Prior to the Ninth Century*, 11 vols. and supplement (Oxford, 1934–1971), vol. 6, 40, no. 838.
 - 22 See Lucia Castaldi, "L'«Archivum Lateranense» e la trasmissione delle opere di Gregorio Magno," in *Gregorio Magno*, 67–71.
 - 23 The only recent critical edition is *RP* ed. Judic, Rommel, and Morel, which, however, collates only one English manuscript. See, however, Richard Clement, "King Alfred and the Latin Manuscripts of Gregory's *Regula pastoralis*," *Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association* 6 (1985): 1–13. See also Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 23–30. There are no surviving ninth-century English manuscripts of the text.

the book in Alfred's time: Grimbald of Saint-Bertin could well have brought with him one or several copies of the text that was considered the authoritative manual for educating bishops, clergy and the laity in his native country.²⁴

The Manuscripts of the Old English *Pastoral Care*

The Old English *Pastoral Care* is preserved in the following manuscripts:²⁵

- (1) Tib London, BL, Cotton Tiberius B. xi +
- (2) K Kassel, Gesamthochschulbibliothek 4^o Ms theol. 131 (olim: Landesbibliothek, Anhang 19); 890 × 896, Winchester?²⁶
- (3) H Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 20; 890 × 896, South of England (Winchester?), provenance: Worcester, s. ix^{ex}.²⁷
- (4) C CCCC 12; s. x², provenance: Worcester, s. xiii.²⁸
- (5) T Cambridge, Trinity College R.5.22 (717), fols. 72–158; s. x/xi, provenance: Sherborne or Salisbury.²⁹
- (6) O London, BL, Cotton Otho B. ii and Otho B. x, fols. 61, 63, 64; s. x² or x/xi, Southeast of England, possibly London.³⁰
- (7) U Cambridge, University Library, Ii. 2.4; s. xi^{3/4}, Exeter.³¹

24 On parallels between Alfred's translation and later textual variants in Continental manuscripts, see Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 34–35. The recension current under Hincmar could be ascertained by an examination of Rheims, Bibliothèque Municipale Ms 421, a manuscript copied at the Archbishop's request, see Jean Devisse, *Hincmar*, 1495.

25 See Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 51–82, with further references.

26 Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 195; Gneuss 375. Facsimile in Neil R. Ker, *The Pastoral Care*, Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile 6 (Copenhagen: 1956).

27 Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 324; Gneuss, *Handlist*, no. 626. Ed. and trans. by Henry Sweet, *King Alfred's West Saxon Version of Gregory's "Pastoral Care,"* 2 vols., EETS OS 45, 50 (1871–72; repr. with corrections and additions by N.R. Ker, London: 1958). Facsimile in Ker, *Pastoral Care*.

28 Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 30; Gneuss, *Handlist*, no. 37, partially ed. (with variant readings from all MSS) in Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 190–453.

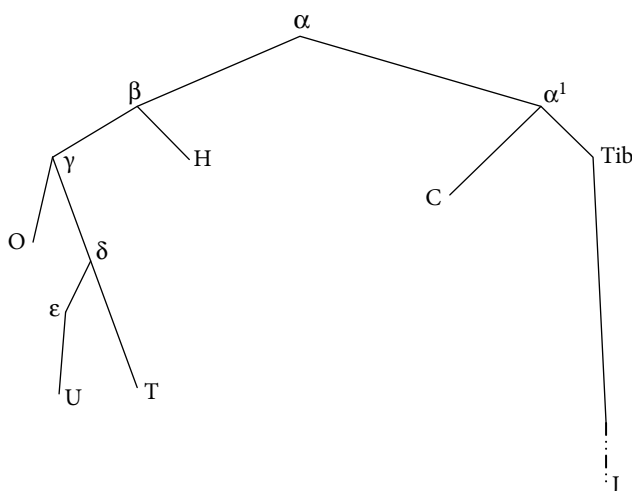
29 Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 87; Gneuss, *Handlist*, no. 180.

30 Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 175; Gneuss, *Handlist*, no. 353. Ed. by Ingvar Carlson, *The Pastoral Care edited from British Museum MS Cotton Otho B. ii*, Part I, Stockholm Studies in English 34 (Stockholm: 1975) and *idem*, *The Pastoral Care edited from BL MS Cotton Otho B. ii, Part II* (ff. 25^v/4– end), completed by Lars G. Hallander, Mattias Löfvenberg and Alarik Rynell, Stockholm Studies in English 48 (Stockholm: 1978).

31 Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 19; Gneuss, *Handlist*, no. 14.

The preservation of several early copies is exceptional for an Old English text. One of the manuscripts, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 20 (H), is contemporary with the authorial version (α); another contemporary manuscript is London, BL, Cotton Tiberius B.xi (Tib). This manuscript was almost totally destroyed in the Cottonian fire of 1731; besides some shrivelled fragments kept in London, a single leaf is preserved in Kassel, Gesamthochschulbibliothek 4^o MS theol. 131 (K). In the seventeenth century, MS Tib was copied by Francis Junius (1589–1677); this transcript is preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 53 (J).³² By the time it was copied, Tib was already incomplete; it stopped in ch. 49.³³

The stemmatic relation between these manuscripts is summarized in the following diagram:³⁴



The distribution of hands in the earliest manuscripts H and Tib gives us some clues about the scriptorium where they were written. The Prose and the Verse Preface in MS Tib are in different hands (hand 1 and hand 2). Another scribe was responsible for the text of the translation (hand 3).³⁵ MS H is in three (possibly four) hands: the main hand (hand 4), responsible for most of

32 See Madan *et al.*, *Summary Catalogue*, no. 5165. Ed. by Sweet.

33 380.15.

34 See Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 65–74.

35 Humfrey Wanley, *Librorum Veterum Septentrionalium, qui in Angliae Bibliothecis exstant Catalogus Historico-criticus...* (Oxford: 1705), 217: “utraque praefatio, sicut in Cod. Werferthiano, ab aliena manu scripta, Codici praemittitur” [“each of the prefaces, written by another hand, is prefixed to the codex, just as in the Wærferth-codex”].

the translation, working in collaboration with a second scribe (hand 5), who wrote altogether 525 lines on thirteen occasions.³⁶ The Prose Preface in MS H was written on a separate bifolium (fols. 1–2) by one of the scribes of MS Tib (hand 3).³⁷ The scribe who added the Verse Preface on fol. 2v of MS H is almost certainly identical with the main scribe (hand 4) of the rest of the manuscript.³⁸ Besides, the scribe of the Prose Preface of MS H (hand 3) repaired omissions of the principal scribe (hand 4) on two occasions, which suggests that his colleague's work was checked against some other manuscript. This distribution of hands is most economically explained if we assume that both Tib and H (including the bifolium with the Prose and Verse Preface) were written in the same scriptorium, where at least five scribes were active, though not necessarily all at the same time. If we include the scribe of an inscription on fol. 1r of MS Tib, to the effect that copies had been given to Archbishop Plegmund, to bishop Swiðulf and to bishop Wærferth, there is evidence of an organized team of at least six scribes.³⁹ A close connection of this scriptorium with the Alfredian court must be assumed.⁴⁰

We can deduce from the above-mentioned inscription also a *terminus ante quem* for the completion of the *Pastoral Care*. It must have been circulated in a period delimited by the elevation of Plegmund to the archbishopric in 890 and by the death of Bishop Swiðulf of Rochester in 893 x 896. If the description of the court *schola* and other passages in Asser's *Life of King Alfred* are dependent on the Prose Preface, this time span can be narrowed down even further, since this biography was written in 893.⁴¹

Method and Style of the Translation

When claiming to have translated Gregory's Latin text "hwilum word be worde, hwilum ondgiæt of ondgiæte," Alfred of course quoted an ancient literary

36 See Ker, *Pastoral Care*, 20, for the folios on which these passages occur.

37 Ker, *Pastoral Care*, 21.

38 Ker, *Pastoral Care*, 22.

39 "+ Plegmunde arcebiſc is agifen his boc...[ond] Swiðulfe biſc...[ond] Wærferðe biſc...", from Junius's transcript (Junius 53), p. xviii, quoted in Ker, *Pastoral Care*, 12. See also Sweet, p. 471.

40 See Simon Keynes, "The Power of the Written Word: Alfredian England 871–899," in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Reuter, 175–97.

41 See K&L, 296, nn. 14–15; Dorothy Whitelock, "Recent Work on Asser's Life of Alfred," in *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, ed. William Henry Stevenson (Oxford: 1959), cxxxii–clii, at cxlvii–cxlix.

topos.⁴² The *Pastoral Care* is the most literal among the Alfredian translations: There are no passages which follow the Latin only loosely as in the versions of the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* and the *Soliloquia*.⁴³ Since the *Pastoral Care* is generally assumed to be the earliest of these translations, some commentators attributed this literalness to the translator's lack of experience.⁴⁴ Others looked for an explanation in Gregory's unadorned Latin prose, or saw in the close translation a vernacular crib for students of the Latin original.⁴⁵

However, the Old English version normally does not follow the Latin syntax or phraseology slavishly. This is a feature which distinguishes the "royal" corpus of translations from the other early translations as the Mercian *Dialogues* and *Bede*, where syntactic Latinisms are frequent. This relatively free approach has been attributed to practices of recitation, and may be a pointer to the mode of the translation process.⁴⁶ As a passage in the Prose Preface suggests, Alfred apparently first had his four scholarly helpers elucidate the meaning of the text—presumably through oral explication—before he translated the text into English "swæ swæ ic hie forstod [ond] swæ ic hie andgitfullicost areccean meahte"—"just as I understood it and as I could *most meaningfully* render it."⁴⁷ This passage seems to imply a certain awareness of potential changes of

42 "sometimes word by word and sometimes according to the sense" (7.19–20). On the literary pre-history of this phrase, see, for example, R. Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages: Academic Traditions and Vernacular Texts*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 11 (Cambridge: 1991), 42–55; and Robert Stanton, *The Culture of Translation in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: 2002), 73–78.

43 See, for example, Dorothy Whitelock, "The Prose of Alfred's Reign," in *Continuations and Beginnings: Studies in Old English Literature*, ed. Eric G. Stanley (London: 1966), 67–103, at 79–89; W.H. Brown, "Method and Style in the Old English *Pastoral Care*," *JEGP* 68 (1969): 666–684, at 666; and Allen J. Frantzen, *King Alfred* (Boston: 1986), 30.

44 For dating, see Janet M. Bately, "Old English Prose Before and During the Reign of King Alfred," *ASE* 17 (1988): 93–138, at 125 and n. 184. For explanations of the translation style, see, for example, Sherman M. Kuhn, "Synonyms in the Old English *Bede*," *JEGP* 46 (1947): 168–76, at 176 and Brown, "Method," 684.

45 For Gregory's prose style, see A. Dewitz, *Untersuchungen über Alfreds des Grossen west-sächsische Übersetzung der "Cura Pastoralis" Gregors und ihr Verhältnis zum Original* (Breslau: 1889), 5–6; for the idea of a crib, see Whitelock, "Prose," 68.

46 See David Pratt, "Problems of Authorship and Audience in the Writings of King Alfred the Great," *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World*, ed. P. Wormald and Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge: 2007), 162–91, at 177, with further references, and Bately, "Old English Prose," esp. at 125–131.

47 7.23–25, cf. 463.19. I follow Stanton's translation of the passage (*The Culture of Translation*, 90). See *ibid.*, p. 91 for the semantics of the verb *areccan*.

meaning inherent in the translation process and is an indication of Alfred's ultimate ideal of translation.

Omissions and Additions

Whereas adverbs such as *forte* ["by chance"], *omnino* ["wholly, entirely"], etc., are frequently left untranslated, longer omissions of entire clauses or sentences are rare.⁴⁸ Some passages could have been sacrificed because the unfamiliar concepts would have required lengthy explanations, e.g. "praesentis uitae stadio" ("in the arena of this (present) life," *RP* 308.7,⁴⁹ cf. 229.17), *aurigarum, histrionum* ("charioteers," "actors," *RP* 308.18, cf. 231.7). Other omitted passages may have touched upon taboo areas, e.g. "dormi cum incircumcisis" ("sleep with the uncircumcised," *RP* 536.24–25, cf. 463.19), or "masculorum concubitores" ("liars with mankind, male homosexuals," *RP* 456.138–139, cf. 401.28).

In concord with an ideal of clarity, additions are much more frequent than omissions. Thus, personal names, mainly from the Bible, are further specified by appositions, e.g. "Dinan...Iacobes dohtor" ("Dinah, the daughter of Jacob," 415.13–14) for Lat. *Dinae* (*RP* 470.44).⁵⁰ Figures whose names are not mentioned in the Latin text are identified, e.g. *ðurh Essaia's ðone witgan* ("through Isaiah the prophet," 315.12) for Lat. *prophetam* (*RP* 378.82).⁵¹ Sometimes, metaphoric expressions of the original are sacrificed for the sake of clarity, as in *Timotheum his cniht* ("his servant Timothy," 169.16) for *praelatum gregi discipulum* ("the disciple who was appointed over the flock," *RP* 252.15).⁵² The abstract concepts of the Latin text are not infrequently replaced by concrete translations, as in *God* (391.32) for *diuina dispensatio* ("divine providence," *RP* 444.91).⁵³

48 The following survey is based on Gustav Wack, *Über das Verhältnis von König Aelfreds Übersetzung der "Cura Pastoralis" zum Original* (Greifswald: 1889); and Dewitz, *Untersuchungen*. On the omission of adverbs, see Wack, *Verhältnis*, 7 and Dewitz, *Untersuchungen*, 28. For longer omissions, see Wack, *Verhältnis*, 7–9; C.D. Jeffery, "The Latin Texts Underlying the Old English *Gregory's Dialogues* and *Pastoral Care*," *Notes & Queries* N.S. 27 (1980): 487–488. In the absence of a critical edition of the Latin text, deliberate omissions cannot be distinguished from gaps in a faulty exemplar.

49 I follow the rather literal translation by Henry Davis, *St. Gregory the Great: Pastoral Care*, Ancient Christian Writers 11 (Westminster, MD: 1950).

50 Richard W. Clement, "The Production of the *Pastoral Care*: King Alfred and his Helpers," in *Studies in Earlier Old English Prose*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany, NY: 1986), 129–152, at 133–134, counts 81 such appositions.

51 Clement, "Production," 133–134, counts 144 instances of such identifications.

52 For further examples, see Clement, "Production," 133–134.

53 A list is found in Wack, *Verhältnis*, 26–30; for further examples of inserted explanatory phrases, see Simon Potter, "The Old English 'Pastoral Care,'" *Transactions of the Philological Society* (London: 1947): 114–25, at 118–119.

Explanatory appositions are also given to unfamiliar Latin common or proper nouns, as in “mid [ðæm] stane iacincta” (“with the gem jacinth,” 83.24) for Lat. *hyacintho* (RP 184.48). Longer explanatory parentheses explain less familiar concepts, e.g. “purpura, ðæt is cynelic hræg[!], forðæm hit tacnað kynelicne anwald” (“purple, which is a royal vestment, since it is the sign of royal authority,” 85.9–10) for Lat. *purpura* (RP 184.48), or clarify the meaning of abstract or ambiguous nouns, as in “ða stænenan bredu ðe sio æ wæs on awriten mid tien bebodum” (“the stone tablets on which the law was written in ten commandments,” 125.18) for “cum tabulis” (“with the tablets,” RP 216.202) and “ða XII apostolas, [ond] siððan ealle ða endebyrdnessa ðara biscopa ðe ðeræfter fylgeað” (“the twelve apostles and the whole succession of bishops which come after them,” 105.6) for *ordo* (“the order,” RP 200.73).⁵⁴

Especially in the later parts of the translation, the sources of biblical passages are specified, whereas they are quoted in the Latin text without identification, e.g. “Be ðæm ilcan is eft awriten on Exodo, ðæt is Moyses bók, hit is awrieten” (“Of the same is again written in Exodus, the book of Moses,” 389.22–23) for Lat. “Hinc rursum scriptum est” (“here again it is written,” RP 402.50).⁵⁵ Occasionally, these attributions are faulty: Lat. “calceati pedes in praeparatione evangelii pacis” (“feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,” Eph. 6: 15, RP 146.41–43) is erroneously attributed to the Gospels (cf. 45.9–10); in another passage, a quotation from I Corinthians 4: 21 (RP 210.110–11) is ascribed to Galatians (cf. 117.7).⁵⁶

A sound knowledge of the Bible is revealed by some expansions of quotations from Scripture, as in “ðæt hie cumen to Galileum; ðær hie me geseoð” (“that they come to Galilee, where they will see me,” 43.20), where the Latin text cites only the preceding sentence from Mt 28: 10 (cf. RP 146.32). Similarly, the passage “Hwæðer wille ge ðæt ic cume to eow, ðe mid gierde ðe mid monnðwære gæste” (“Do ye wish me to come to you with a rod, or with gentleness of spirit?,” 117.7–8) expands a quote from II Cor 4: 21 (cf. RP 210.110–11). The biblical episode of Jacob’s ladder (Gen. 28: 12), which is only briefly mentioned in Gregory (RP 198.39–40), is considerably expanded in the Old English

54 For a list of similar additions, see also Simon Potter, “On the Relation of the Old English Bede to Werferth’s Gregory and to Alfred’s Translations,” *Vestník kralovské české společnosti nauk. Trída filosoficko-historicko-jazykozpytná*, 1930 (Prague: 1931), 1–76, at 43–44; and Brown, “Method,” 670.

55 Clement, “Production,” 133–134, counts 76 examples. But see Schreiber, *King Alfred’s Translation*, 27 and n. 27, on marginal additions which identify these biblical passages in some early manuscripts.

56 For further misattributions, see Clement, “Production,” 135.

translation (101.15–21). The interpretation of another biblical passage (III Kings 6:7) can almost be called exegetical:⁵⁷

Hinc est enim quod lapides extra tumsi sunt, ut in constructione templi Domini absque mallei sonitu ponerentur. (*RP* 326.73–328.75)⁵⁸

Be ðys ilcan is gecueden on kyninga bocum, sua sua hit geworden wæs, [ond] eac ús to bisene. Hit is gecueden ðætte ða stanas on ðæm mæran temple Salomonnes wæron sua we[l] gefegede [ond] sua emne gesnidene [ond] gesmeðde, ær hie mon to ðæm stede brohte ðe hie on standan scoldon, ðætte hie mon eft siððan on ðære halgan stowe sua tosomne gesette ðæt ðær nan monn ne gehierde ne æxe helm ne bietles sueg. (253.11–17)⁵⁹

Syntax

The basic unit for the Old English translation is usually the sentence, but sometimes the version is based on larger sections of Gregory's text.⁶⁰ Words or phrases which occur at the beginning of a passage are thus sometimes repeated at the end in order to unify the passage and to ensure its coherence.⁶¹ In a similar way, the conclusion of a Latin passage is sometimes anticipated, e.g. by the insertion of a rhetorical question:

Vnde necesse est ut cum cogitatio extra usum ducitur, protinus mentis oculus ad opera transacta reuocetur... (*RP* 158.17–18)⁶²

57 For similar passages, see Wack, *Verhältnis*, 15.

58 "Hence is it that the stones were hammered on the outside, that they might be set in the building of the Temple of the Lord without the sound of a hammer."

59 "Of the same is spoken in the books of Kings, as it happened, and also as an example for us; it is said that the stones in the famous temple of Solomon were so well fitted, and so evenly cut and polished before being brought to the place where they were to stand, that they were afterwards so joined together in the holy place, that no man heard there the sound either of axe or hammer."

60 See Bately, "Old English Prose," 126; and Wright, *Literary Translations*, 140.

61 For further examples, see R.R. Moye, Jr., "Alfred's Method of Translation in the Old English 'Pastoral Care,'" unpubl. PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1993), 6–11.

62 "When, therefore, thought has been straying inordinately, the eye of the mind must promptly be called back to its activities in the past..."

Hu mæg hit butan ðam beom ðætte ðæt mod ðe ær wæs keled of his gewunan for ðære wilnunge ðære worldare, ðæt hit ne sie eft to gecirred ðonne hit hæfð ðætte hit ær wilnode? Ac sona beoð ðæs modes eagan eft gewende to ðæm weorcum ðe hit ær worhte. (57.8–12)⁶³

Clarification and coherence are also the motifs for the insertion of patterns of contrasting elements and word pairs, as in “forðæmðe oftor on ðæm hieran folgoðe mon forlæt goodne gewunan, ðonne he hine ðæron geleornige, gif he hine ær næfde on læssan folgoðe [ond] on maran æmettan” (57.23–59.1) for “Quamuis plerumque in occupatione regiminis ipse boni quoque operis usus perditur, qui in tranquillitate tenebatur” (RP 158.28–30).⁶⁴

Doublets are often employed to translate a single Latin lemma, as in “on ceapstowum [ond] on gebeorscipum” (“in market-places and at banquets,” 27.7) for Lat. “in foro” (RP 130, note); they frequently alliterate, as in “ðurh sár [ond] ður(h) sorge” (“by pain and sorrow,” 35.3) for Lat. “per dolorem” (“by sorrow,” RP 138.24), “strienen [ond] stihtigen” (“rule and arrange about,” 131.8) for Lat. “inseruiant” (“engage in,” RP 222.47).⁶⁵ Sometimes this use of doublets results from a deliberate rearrangement of syntactic elements in the Latin, as in “sio upahæfenes [ond] ða ofermetto” (“pride and insolence,” 425.18) for Lat. “elatio superbiae” (“elation of pride,” RP 482.97).⁶⁶

What these alterations reveal is that the translator’s aim seems to have been primarily pragmatic: not only to turn the meaning of the Latin text faithfully into idiomatic vernacular prose, but to make his translation as explicit and as useful to his audience as possible.⁶⁷

63 “How can it otherwise happen that the mind which was formerly diverted from its usual routine through the desire of worldly honour returns thereto when it has attained its desire? And the eyes of the mind soon return to their former works.”

64 “...for in a higher station men oftener lose good habits than learn them there, if they had them not in a humbler station and in greater leisure...” for “Very frequently, when the office of rule is undertaken, the practice of good deeds is relinquished, though it had been maintained when life was undisturbed.” For further examples, see Moye, “Alfred’s Method,” 11–17, and Wack, *Verhältnis*, 13.

65 For comprehensive lists, see Wack, *Verhältnis*, 34–36; Dewitz, *Untersuchungen*, 18–21.

66 See also Janet M. Bately, “The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 60 B.C. to A.D. 890: Vocabulary as Evidence,” *Proceedings of the British Academy* (1980 for 1978): 93–129, at 126.

67 See Brown, “Method,” 678; Wack, *Verhältnis*, 16; and Phyllis Wright, “Literary Translation in Anglo-Saxon England,” unpubl. PhD diss., University of Toronto (1984), 137.

Style

The strategy of clarification does not, however, lead to an absence of rhetorical or stylistic embellishments of the prose. Stylistic concerns are observable in part III of the *Regula pastoralis*, where Gregory distinguishes between contrasting pairs of subjects and sins, and refers to them usually only as *isti* and *illi* ["the former" and "the latter"]. The stylistic ideal of variation is evident e.g. in Chapter 32, where "protervi" ["the insolent"] is variously rendered as "ða modgan [ond] ða fortruwodan" ("the proud and presumptuous," 209.4, 209.9), "ða fortruwodan" (209.5), "ðara ofertruwedena" ("the over-confident," 209.13), "ða gedyrstigan" ("the confident," 209.15), "ða fortruwudan [ond] ða anwillan" ("the presumptuous and the bold," 209.19–20), etc.⁶⁸ Not infrequently, important passages are foregrounded by the use of alliteration, as in "ðonne he hierð on his heortan ða hyrðenne ðæs bismeres, [ond] suaðeah mid won weorcum hit to ðweorlice ne fremed" (73.12–13).⁶⁹ A number of other figures of speech are used independently of the Latin original, for example *figura etymologica*, e.g. in "to ðæm weorcum ða hit ær worhte" ("to its former works," 57.12) for "ad opera transacta" ("past activities," *RP* 158.18), anaphora with antithesis in "Forðon oft for ðæs lareowes unwisdome misfarað ða hieremen, [ond] oft for ðæs lareowes wisdome unwisum hiere-monnum bið geborgen" (29.4–6),⁷⁰ which has no Latin equivalent (cf. *RP* 132.40).

The imagery of the Latin text is sometimes embellished and usually rendered more concrete, e.g. in several nautical metaphors, or some passages with battle imagery, as in the following passage:⁷¹

Ammonendi sunt igitur patientes, ut cor post uictoriam muniant, ut hostem publico bello superatum insidiari moeniis mentis intendant, ut languorem plus reserpentem timeant, ne hostis callidus eo in deceptione

68 For further examples, see Moye, "Alfred's Method," 45–55.

69 "...when he bears in his heart the burden of shame, and yet does not too perversely carry it out in evil deeds..." See Moye, "Alfred's Method," 56–73 for more examples, which are, however, not always convincing.

70 See Moye, "Alfred's Method," 37–39. "Therefore often through the teacher's folly the disciples come to grief, and often through the teacher's wisdom foolish disciples are preserved..."

71 E.g. in 59.1–7 and 445.9–14 (cf. *RP* 158.30–160.36 and 508.79–82). On Alfred's nautical metaphors, see Miranda Wilcox, "Alfred's Epistemological Metaphors: *eagan modes* and *scip modes*," *ASE* 35 (2006): 179–217. Similar cases are 163.14–18 and 277.15–279.2, cf. *RP* 248.150–52 and 344.73–82.

postmodum maiori exultatione gaudeat, quo illa dudum contra se rigida colla uictorum calcat. (RP 306.157–62)⁷²

Ða geðyldegan sint to manianne ðætte hie hira heortan getrymmen æfter ðæs miclan sige, [ond] ða burg hira modes wið stælherigas behealden, [ond] mid wighusum gefæsðnige, suelce he him ðære adle edcier suiður ondræde ðonne ðone fruman ðylæs se lytega fiond æfter fierste suiður fæg-nige ðæt he hine mid his lotwrencium besuice, ðeah he hine ær openum gefeohte ofercome, [ond] [him] ðone stiðan suiran forbræce. (229.3–9)⁷³

Another metaphor which seems particularly to have impressed the translator is Gregory's comparison of the human mind to water:

Humana etenim mens aquae more et circumclusa ad superiora colligitur, quia illud repetit unde descendit; et relaxata deperit, quia se per infima inutiliter spargit. Quot enim superuacuis uerbis a silentii sui censura dissipatur, quasi tot riuis extra se ducitur. Vnde et redire interius ad sui cognitionem non sufficit, quia per multiloquium sparsa, a secreto se intimae considerationis excludit. (RP 344.66–346.73)⁷⁴

Besides the literal translation of this passage (277.5–14), this simile is taken up independently in another passage:

Et anima dissoluta esuriet. Nam quia se ad superiora stringendo ne dirigit, neglectam se inferius per desideria expandit; et dum studiorum sublimium

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- 72 "The patient are, therefore, to be admonished to fortify their heart after victory, to be on the lookout for the Enemy who was overcome in open conflict, but who is laying snares against the outworks of their minds, and to be more afraid of the sickness creeping back again, lest the crafty Enemy, by a subsequent ruse, rejoice the more exultingly, in that he treads on the neck of the conqueror who for a long time had been inflexible against him."
- 73 "The patient are to be warned to fortify their hearts after so great a victory, and hold the city of their hearts against predatory bands, and fortify it with battlements, as if they dreaded the return of the disease more than its beginning; lest the wily foe after a time rejoice more in entrapping them with his artifices after they had overcome him in an open fight, and breaking their stubborn necks."
- 74 "For the human mind behaves after the manner of water: when enclosed, it collects itself to the higher levels, because it seeks again the height from which it came down. But, when released, it loses itself, in that it scatters itself to no purpose through the lowest levels; indeed, all the superfluous words wasted when it relaces its censorship of silence, are so many streams carrying the mind away from itself. Consequently, it does not have the power to return inwardly to self-knowledge, because, dissipated as it is by much talking, it is diverted from the secret places of inward considerations."

uigore non constringitur, cupiditatis infimae fame sauciat... (*RP* 350.17–18)⁷⁵

Ðæt ungeornfulle mod [ond] ðæt toslopene hyngreð, forðæm he næfre ne beoð gereorde mid godum weorcum, ne hie nellað hie gehæftan [ond] gepyndan hiora mod, swelce mon deopne pool gewerige, ac he læt his mod toflowan on ðæt ofdele giemelieste [ond] ungesceadwisnesse æfter eallum his willum, [ond] ne gehæft hit na mid ðæm gesuincium godra weorca... (283.12–16)⁷⁶

This Gregorian image must also have been the inspiration for the development of the theme in the Metrical Epilogue to the *Pastoral Care*, an urgent admonition to the readers to devote themselves to the pursuit of wisdom.⁷⁷ The independent use of such rhetorical devices bears testimony to a sense of mission and to the creativity and self-confidence of the translator.⁷⁸

Thematic Alterations

Apart from alterations which were the result of this ideal of clarity, a different theological outlook has been noted in a number of additions. A passage where Gregory's statement that sinners are condemned to hell is qualified by an addition which emphasizes God's mercy and the sinner's need for repentance: "buton him ðurh his hreo[w]sung [ond] ðurh Godes miltse geholpen weorðe" ("unless his repentance and God's mercy help him," 251.18–19, cf. *RP* 326.56–57). When Gregory insists that the ruler who has corrupted others by giving a bad example has deserved a number of torments which equals the number of men he has enticed to sin, an addition again stresses the need for repentance and atonement: "buton he eft self gesuice, [ond] swa monige gecierre sua he

75 "and an idle soul shall suffer hunger. When the soul does not direct its efforts to higher things, neglecting itself, it stoops to concern itself with low desires, and when it does not restrain itself by aiming vigorously at higher things, it is wounded by the hunger of a base cupidity..."

76 "'The indifferent and dissolute spirit shall hunger,' because they are never refreshed with good works; nor will they restrain and dam up their mind, as if a man weired a deep pool, but they let their mind flow away into the abyss of recklessness and folly according to all its desires, and do not restrain it with the labours of good works..."

77 See also Susan Irvine's "Alfredian Prefaces and Epilogues" in this volume, Chapter 5; William T. Whobrey, "King Alfred's Metrical Epilogue to the *Pastoral Care*," *JEGP* 90 (1991): 175–186; and Malcolm Godden, "Prologues and Epilogues in the Old English *Pastoral Care*, and Their Carolingian Models," *JEGP* 110 (2011): 441–473, at 465–471. For a list of expanded metaphors and similes, see Clement, "Production," 151, n. 31.

78 Stanton, *Culture of Translation*, 97.

mæsð mæge" ("unless he afterwards ceases, and converts as many as he can," 191.8–9, cf. *RP* 276.14–18). Similarly, the punishment of all sins on doomsday in the original (*RP* 300.79) is attenuated to the punishment of *unatoned* sins (220.17).⁷⁹

Part II, Chapter 6 of the *Regula pastoralis* discusses the origin and purpose of power.⁸⁰ Here as elsewhere, the Old English translation has a more secular focus, since terms like *ealdorman* and *ealdordom* are frequently employed for the ambiguous Latin *rector*;⁸¹ *praelati* is rendered as *ealdormen*, and *praepositus* as *scirman*, thus transferring Gregory's rather vague terms into the worldly spheres of ninth-century social imagery. In one passage, the Latin receives an expansion which bears echoes of the West Saxon status of an *ealdorman* as a royal appointee:⁸²

Inter hypocritas enim iure deputatur, qui ex simulatione disciplinae ministerium regiminis uertit in usu dominationis; et tamen nonnumquam grauius delinquitur si inter peruersos plus aequalitas quam disciplina custoditur. (*RP* 214.161–65)⁸³

Suiðe ryhte se bið geteald to ðæm liceterum se ðe on lareowes onlicnesse ða ðenenga ðæs ealdordomes gecierð to hlaforddome, [ond] gemacað ðæt his ege [ond] his onwald wierð to gewunan [ond] to landsida o[n] his scire. Ond ðeah (h)wilum giet suiðor hie syngiað on ðam ðe hie healdað ma geferrædenne [ond] efnlicnesse ðonne ealdordom wið ða yfelan [ond] ða unryhtwisan. (121.23–123.3)⁸⁴

In another section, the Old English translation heightens the relationship between the lord and his man:

79 For similar passages, see Clement, "Production," 136–137; see also Bately, "Nature," 75.

80 The following paragraphs are indebted to Pratt, *Political Thought*, 196–204.

81 See also John M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Early Germanic Kingship in England and on the Continent* (Oxford: 1971), 144; and Wright, *Literary Translations*, 126 and 131.

82 See Whitelock, "Prose," 84 and H.R. Loyn, "The Term *Ealdorman* in the Translations Prepared at the Time of King Alfred," *EHR* 48 (1935): 513–525.

83 "The man is rightly accounted a hypocrite, who diverts the ministry of government to purposes of domination. Sometimes, though, greater evil ensues when in the cases of wicked persons a policy of equality is adhered to rather than of discipline."

84 "He is very rightly accounted a hypocrite who, while seeming to teach, perverts the ministration of authority to temporal supremacy, and causes the reverence of himself and his power to become the regular habit of the country he rules. And yet sometimes they sin more by making themselves companions and equals of the wicked and unrighteous rather than exercising their authority."

...quia adulterinae cogitationis reus est, si placere puer sponsae oculis appetit, per quem sponsus dona transmisit. (*RP* 232.10–12)⁸⁵

Hwæt we genoh georne witon ðæt se esne ðe ærendað his woroldhlaforde wifes, ðæt he bið diernes gelires scyldig wið God, [ond] wið his hlaford eallenga forworht, gif he wilnað ðæt hio hine lufige, [ond] he hire licige bet ðonne se se hine [ond] ðæt feoh ðider sende. (143.1–4)⁸⁶

The translation also claims that *hlafordscipe* (lit. “lordship”) should not be opposed, because it was created by God, whereas the Latin original is more vague:

Nam cum praepositis delinquimus, eius ordini qui eos nobis praetulit obuiamus. (*RP* 282.113–14)⁸⁷

...forðæm ðonne we agyltað wið ða hlafordas, ðonne agylte we wi(ð) ðone God ðe hlafordscipe gescop. (201.2–3)⁸⁸

Loyalty as part of the *comitatus* is stressed in the episode about David, who cut off a piece of Saul’s robe to signify that he had him in his power and yet spared him for “ðam ealdan treowum” (“for old allegiance,” 199.3; cf. *RP* 282.105–6).⁸⁹

An important qualification for the right exertion of power is humility, one of the fundamental attributes of a good leader in the *Regula pastoralis*. The story of the punishment of Saul because of his pride, which arose from his wordly elevation, and that of David, who in sinful pride desired Bathsheba and slew her husband, Uriah, is related in the Old English translation in much greater detail than in the original.⁹⁰ Apart from its thematic interest, it is also an excellent example of the strategies of clarification as outlined above:

85 “...a servant is guilty of adulterous thought, if he craves to please the eyes of the bride when the bridegroom sends gifts to her by him.”

86 “We know well that the servant who obtains a wife for his worldly master is guilty of adultery towards god, and altogether guilty towards his master if he wish her to love him, and himself to please her better than he who sent him and the money thither.”

87 “For when we offend those set over us, we oppose the ordinance of Him who set them above us.”

88 “...for when we sin against our lords, we sin against the god who created authority.”

89 See also Moye, “Alfred’s Method,” 150.

90 For a similar enlargement on the divine punishment of Saul’s pride, see 113.5–12 and *RP* 206.64–208.70.

Sic Saul, qui indignum se prius considerans fugerat, mox ut regni gubernacula percepit, intumuit. Honorari namque coram populi cupiens, dum reprehendi publice noluit, ipsum qui in regno se unxerat, scidit. Sic David auctoris iudicio paene in cunctis actibus placens, mox pressurae pondere caruit, in tumore uulneris erupit, factusque est in morte uiri crudeliter rigidus, quia in appetitu feminae eneruiter fluxus... (RP 138.32–140.39)⁹¹

Sua sua Sawl s[e] cyning: æresð he fleah ðæt rice, [ond] tealde hine selfne his suiðe únwierðne. Ac sona swa he ðone anwald onfeng ðæs rices, he ástag on ofermetto, [ond] hine bealg wið ðone ilcan Samuel ðe hine ær on ðæm rice gebrohte, [ond] hine to gehalgode, forðamðe he him sæde beforan ðam folce his únðeawas, ða he him ær hiera ðonces gestieran ne meahte; [ond] ða he him from wolde, ða gefeng he hine, [ond] toslat his hrægl, [ond] hine geunarode. Swa eac Dauit, ðe folneah on eallum ðingum Gode licode, sona sua he ða byrðenne næfde sua monegra earfeða, he wæs mid ofermettum gewundad, [ond] ðæt suiðe wælhreowlice gecyðde on Úrias slæge hi[s] agenes holdes ðegnes, for ðære scam-leaslecan gewilnunge his wifes. (35.14–24)⁹²

The importance attributed to the pursuit of wisdom is stressed in the Old English translation: the neutral *rector* of the Latin original is most often translated by *lareow* “teacher”; the etymologically related words *læran* “to teach,” *lareowdom* “office of teacher” and *lar* “learning” occur much more frequently than, for example, *discere* “to learn” or *magister* “teacher” in the original

91 “It was thus that Saul, realising at first his unworthiness, fled from the honour of governing, but presently assumed it, and was puffed up with pride. By his desire for honour before the people, and wishing not to be blamed before them, he alienated him who had anointed him to be king. So also David. Well-pleasing in almost all his actions in the judgment of Him who had chosen him, so soon as the burden of his obligations was not upon him, he broke out into festering conceit and showed himself as harsh and cruel in the murder of a man, as he had been weakly dissolute in his desire for a woman.”

92 “As king Saul first declined the throne, and deemed himself quite unworthy of it. But as soon as he obtained the rule of the kingdom, he became proud, and was angry with that same Samuel who formerly brought him to the throne, and consecrated him, because he told him of his faults before the people, since he could not control him before with their approval; and when he wished to depart from him, he sized him, and tore his clothes, and insulted him. So also David, who pleased God in nearly everything, as soon as he had not the burden of so many troubles, he was wounded with pride, and showed it very cruelly in the murder of Uriah, his own faithful servant, for the shameless desire of his wife.”

version. These shifts of meaning bear testimony to the translator's self-confident perception as teacher in the pursuit of divine wisdom.⁹³

The Audience of the Old English Translation

As the discussion of translation techniques has shown, the Old English *Pastoral Care* was not intended as a class textbook or vernacular crib for students of Latin. Evidence for its intended audience is provided especially by the elaborate framing texts composed to accompany the Old English translation. The opening greeting in the Prose Preface is addressed to a bishop in four of the six extant manuscripts (Tib and C have a blank), and the concluding directives about the distribution of copies to the bishoprics and their safekeeping are clearly aimed at an episcopal audience. Also the Verse Preface repeats the king's intention to provide the bishops with copies of the text.⁹⁴ This tallies with the evidence for the dissemination of the *Pastoral Care*: As far as we know, it was bishops who received copies, namely Swiðulf of Rochester, Wærferth of Worcester, Hehstan of London, Wulfsgie of Sherborne, and Archbishop Plegmund of Canterbury; they were therefore sent not only to the bishops of Wessex, but of every part of England not under Danish control.⁹⁵ Alfred thus seems to have followed the example of his Mercian and Continental predecessors: he intended to improve the standards of pastoral care in England by using his royal authority to distribute the manual which offered spiritual guidance for the episcopate as well as practical advice for the preacher.⁹⁶

It seems, however, as if the second function of the book, that of a mirror for princes, was another motif for the translation of this text.⁹⁷ In the Prose Preface, secular office-holders are alluded to in the reference to the wise men in both clergy and laity ("ægðer ge godcundra hada ge weoruldcundra") and to

93 See Moye, "Alfred's Method," 119–120. See also Ross Smythe, "King Alfred's Translation: Authorial Integrity and the Integrity of Authority," *Quaestio Insularis* 4 (2003): 98–114, at 114.

94 9.14–15.

95 Plegmund, Swiðulf and Wærferth were mentioned in the memorandum formerly on fol. 1 of MS Tib; Hehstan is the addressee of the preface of MS O, Wærferth that of MS H; Wulfsgie I of Sherborne is addressed in the prefaces MSS T and U.

96 See also Godden, "Prologues," 441–473.

97 Nicole Guenther Discenza, "The Influence of Gregory the Great on the Alfredian Social Imaginary," in *Rome and the North*, 67–81, at 68. Cf. Patrick Wormald, "Living with King Alfred," *Haskins Society Journal* (2006 for 2004): 24–39, at 15–16.

the kings who prospered both with war and with wisdom (“ægðer ge mid wige ge mid wisdom”) in the glorious past. The intended audience of the Prose Preface in general, which outlines a plan for general renewal and education, seems to include this group.⁹⁸ Besides, as we have seen, a more secular focus can be observed in many of the thematic alterations in the Old English translation.

The profound impact of the concept of the ideal ruler outlined in the *Regula pastoralis* on Alfred's self-perception or political image can be traced in Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, the peculiarities of which have long puzzled historians.⁹⁹ The king is presented as a ruler who leads a life of exemplary virtue, uniting the qualities of the Gregorian *rector*—above all wisdom, but also righteousness, foresight, gentleness, clemency, generosity and justice.¹⁰⁰ At the same time he is portrayed as vexed by repeated illnesses, which, however, must be interpreted in a Gregorian light as well: By the recollection of bodily affliction, the spirit is prevented from becoming puffed up with pride and is reminded of the humility which it ought to maintain.¹⁰¹ Also the balance between the contemplative and active life, which Asser repeatedly emphasizes, can be traced to the *Regula pastoralis*, and is especially recommended to the readers of the Prose Preface (5.1–4).¹⁰² Alfred's acquaintance with Gregory's work with its emphasis on the pursuit of wisdom and teaching thus seems to have had a formative influence on his political thought and to have been the catalyst for his plan to initiate an educational and at the same time spiritual reform. To pursue the path of wisdom is strongly recommended to the audience of the Prose Preface, which reads like an exhortation to follow the king's example: “Therefore I beseech you to do as I believe you *are* willing to to: as often as you can, free yourself from worldly affairs so that you can apply the wisdom which God gave you wherever you can.”¹⁰³

98 3.3–4 and 3.5. On the ambiguity of intended audience, see Malcolm Godden, “The Alfredian Project and its Aftermath: Rethinking the Literary History of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries,” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 162 (2009): 93–122, at 100–107, and Godden, “Prologues,” 459–461.

99 Ed. Stevenson, *Life of King Alfred*.

100 Matthew Kempshall, “No Bishop, No King: The Ministerial Ideology of Kingship and Asser's *Res Gestae Ælfredi*,” in *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies presented to Henry Mayr-Harting*, ed. R. Gameson and H. Leyser (Oxford: 2001), 107–127; Pratt, *Political Thought*, esp. ch. 7.

101 Kempshall, “No Bishop,” 120.

102 See Asser's Chapters 99–104, ed. Stevenson, 85–92, K&L, *Alfred*, 105–109; compare *Regula pastoralis* 129.24–131.6; cf. *Règle Pastorale*, ed. Judic, Rommel, and Morel, 220.39–41.

103 Friedrich Klaeber, “Zu König Ælfreds Vorrede zu seiner Übersetzung der *Cura Pastoralis*,” *Anglia* 47 (1923): 53–65, at 57–59 and Magoun, “Some Notes,” 97 and n. 7 suggest that the

Not only does earthly wealth depend upon this pursuit of wisdom, as Alfred explains in the subsequent passages, but also the foreign invasions must be considered a divine punishment for the neglect of wisdom.¹⁰⁴ The Verse Epilogue ends similarly with a potent exhortation to his audience to improve their scholarly performance, or, in Alfred's imagery, to repair carefully the leaky pitchers with which they had hoped to be able to draw the streams of wisdom.¹⁰⁵

That this translation was intended as the beginning of a larger programme of reform is stated in the well-known passage of the Prose Preface, in which it is announced that other translations into the vernacular were to follow, and one or several schools were to be established, where "all the free-born young men now in England" were to be instructed in reading and writing in English and those destined for "a higher rank of office" also in Latin.¹⁰⁶ The special importance which the king attributed to Gregory's work is evident from the carefully planned distribution of copies and from the provision that the book should always remain in the minster churches, together with the precious *æstel* with which it was adorned:

I intend to send a copy to each bishopric in my kingdom; and in [on?] each copy there will be an *æstel* worth fifty mancuses. And in God's name I command that no one shall take the *æstel* from the book nor the book from the church... Therefore I would wish that they always remain in place, unless the bishop wishes to have the book with him, or it is on loan somewhere or someone is copying it.¹⁰⁷

If indeed the *æstel* can be identified with objects like the Alfred jewel, even the visual symbolism of the artefacts connected to the Alfredian reform

passage was inspired by Chapter I (Sweet, 24–29) and XXII (168–73) of the *Pastoral Care*. The quotation is from K&L, 125. Dorothy Whitelock (in *Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse*, 15th ed. [1967; rev. ed., repr. with corrections, Oxford: 1970], 224) considers canon 8 of the synod of Clofesho a source for this passage.

104 See Janet N. Nelson, "Wealth and Wisdom: The Politics of Alfred the Great," in *Kings and Kingship*, ed. J. Rosenthal, State University of New York Acta 11 (New York: 1984), 31–52; Kempshall, "No Bishop," 107–27, and Pratt, *Political Thought, passim*.

105 On the rhetorical strategies employed, see P.R. Orton, "King Alfred's Prose Preface to the Old English *Pastoral Care*, ll. 30–41," *Peritia* 2 (1983): 140–48.

106 7.6–15; K&L, *Alfred*, 126. 7.15 *hierran hade*, is translated by Keynes and Lapidge as "holy orders."

107 K&L, 126. For the meaning of *æstel*, probably "book-pointer," see D.R. Howlett, "Alfred's *Æstel*," *English Philological Studies* 14 (1975): 65–74.

seems to have been inspired by the *Regula pastoralis*.¹⁰⁸ The imagery of this jewel, with its depiction of a robed figure seated in judgement, has been convincingly linked with Gregory's description of the wise pastor clothed in righteousness, his judgement symbolized by carrying a rod in one hand and a staff in the other.¹⁰⁹

In contrast to earlier attempts at reform, an English translation of this central text was inevitable, since the king had no illusions about the Latin learning of some of his addressees: The Metrical Preface states that a vernacular version was needed "...because some of them who least knew Latin had need thereof."¹¹⁰ Without doubting the legitimacy of translating Gregory's text, Alfred explicitly and confidently connects this translation of a book "most necessary for all men to know" to the transmission of God's Law in the languages of the Christian peoples, thus again underlining the centrality of the *Regula Pastoralis*.¹¹¹

The Language of the Old English Translation

The three earliest textual witnesses of the Old English *Pastoral Care*, H, Tib (represented by the transcript J) and C are probably at no more than two removes from the first written version of the translation. Due to this unusually rich manuscript evidence, the original language of the archetype can be reconstructed with some confidence by a careful analysis of the different layers of scribal dialectal features.

As far as lexis is concerned, as early as 1906 Richard Jordan identified some specifically Anglian words in this most important textual witness for Early West Saxon; this list has since been considerably expanded.¹¹² Additional evidence is provided by a revised version of the *Pastoral Care* which is preserved in the younger manuscripts U and T, in which a substantial number

108 See Pratt, *Political Thought*, 189–190 and Leslie Webster, "Ædificia nova: Treasures of Alfred's Reign" in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Reuter, 79–103; and her chapter in this volume, Chapter 2.

109 *RP*, 216–218; Kempshall, "No Bishop," 124–125.

110 K&L, *Alfred*, 126.

111 5.25–7.8.

112 Richard Jordan, *Eigentümlichkeiten des Englischen Wortschatzes. Eine wortgeographische Untersuchung mit etymologischen Anmerkungen*, Anglistische Forschungen 13 (1906; repr. Amsterdam: 1967), Hans Schabram, *Superbia: Studien zum altenglischen Wortschatz. Teil I: Die dialektale und zeitliche Verbreitung des Wortguts* (Munich: 1965), and Franz Wenisch, *Spezifisch anglisches Wortgut in den nordhumbrischen Interlinearglossierungen des Lukasevangeliums*, Anglistische Forschungen 132 (Heidelberg: 1979).

of lexical items was replaced, apparently because of their Anglian dialect colouring.¹¹³

An analysis of the phonology and morphology of the three early manuscripts reveals that also on these linguistic levels non-West Saxon dialect features occur in considerable numbers.¹¹⁴ Most of these can be attributed to Mercian influence; only sporadically do features occur which are classed as specifically Northumbrian in the grammars.¹¹⁵ What is remarkable is that only *some* Anglian features occur frequently, whereas others are extremely rare. In addition, some phonological forms which are usually attributed to the Southeast preclude the interpretation of the language of the *Pastoral Care* as a homogenous subdialect.¹¹⁶

The interpretation of this linguistic evidence has been controversial. The most frequently offered hypothesis is that the features that are alien to "pure" West Saxon must be attributed to the individual influence of Alfred's Mercian collaborators or to members of the royal family from outside Wessex.¹¹⁷ Other scholars interpreted them as reflexes of the spelling habits of Anglian scribes, or as remnants of the conventions of an earlier supradialectal language based on Mercian.¹¹⁸ Since there is, however, no reliable evidence for the existence of such an early literary language, the latter remains unconvincing.¹¹⁹

113 For details, see Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 124–127, 137–182 and commentary.

114 Cf. Dorothy Horgan, "West Saxon Dialect Criteria in the Extant Manuscripts of King Alfred's Translation of Gregory's *Regula Pastoralis* and Orosius's *Historiae adversus Paganos*," unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Manchester (1963). The phonological and morphological features are discussed in detail in Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 83–132. See also Carolin Schreiber, "Dialects in Contact in Ninth-Century England," *Bookmarks from the Past: Studies in Early English Language and Literature in Honour of Helmut Gneuss*, ed. Lucia Kornexl and Ursula Lenker (Frankfurt: 2003), 1–31.

115 See Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 129–132.

116 See Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 89–96 and 107–10.

117 See Janet L. Nelson, "Reconstructing a Royal Family: Reflections on Alfred, From Asser, Chapter 2," in *People and Places in Northern Europe, 500–1600: Essays in Honour of Peter Hayes Sawyer*, ed. Ian Wood and N. Lund (Woodbridge: 1991), 47–66.

118 See, for example, Alistair Campbell, *Old English Grammar* (Oxford, 1959), 8–9, § 16 and 110, § 258. For the theory of a Mercian-Kentish literary standard, see Karl Wildhagen, "Studien zum Psalterium Romanum in England und zu seinen Glossierungen in geschichtlicher Entwicklung," in *Festschrift für Lorenz Morsbach*, Studien zur englischen Philologie 50 (Halle: 1913), 417–72.

119 See Celia Sisam, (review of Vleeskruyer, *St. Chad*), *Review of English Studies*, N.S. 6 (1955): 302 and Bately, "Old English Prose," 98–112.

Modern sociolinguistic research may offer a more plausible explanation: face-to-face contact between speakers of mutually intelligible dialects usually results in phenomena of dialect accommodation.¹²⁰ The speakers select not *all* the features of the other variety, but only those perceived as salient.¹²¹ The first level concerned is usually the lexis, followed by phonological accommodation, which is typically partial and incomplete.¹²² It can then develop into an “inter-dialect,” which is characterized by hybrid forms, that is, forms that originally occurred in neither dialect. The emergent new interdialect is characterized by a great deal of variability until a reduction of variant forms takes place, a process also known as koineization.¹²³ These observations account remarkably well not only for the linguistic characteristics of the *Pastoral Care*, but for the status of Early West Saxon in general.¹²⁴ The wider historical context for this West Saxon-Mercian interdialect has been reconstructed by Simon Keynes: a looser association of Wessex and Mercia around the middle of the ninth century developed into the “Kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons,” conceived as a polity for all the English people who were not under subjection to the Danes in the 880s.¹²⁵

Authorship

The personal involvement of the king in the Alfredian translation programme has been the subject of much debate. From a minimalist standpoint, Alfred's contribution amounted to no more than the authorisation and distribution of

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- 120 See H. Giles, “Social Psychology and Applied Linguistics: Towards an Integrative Approach,” *ILT Review of Applied Linguistics* 35 (1977): 27–45 and C. Gallois, *et al.* “Communication Accommodation in International Encounters,” *Theories in Intercultural Communication*, ed. Y.Y. Kim and W.B. Gudykunst, International Communication Annual 12 (Newbury Park: 1988), 147–185.
- 121 Peter Trudgill, *Dialects in Contact*, Language in Society 10 (Oxford: 1986), 10–11.
- 122 Trudgill, *Dialects*, 62.
- 123 Trudgill, *Dialects*, 106, J. Siegel, “Dialect Contact and Koineization,” *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 99 (1993): 105–21, at 112.
- 124 See also Schreiber, “Dialects in Contact,” 15–24.
- 125 Simon Keynes, “King Alfred and the Mercians,” *Kings, Currency and Alliances: History and Coinage of Southern England in the Ninth Century*, ed. M.A.S. Blackburn and D.N. Dumville, Studies in Anglo-Saxon History 9 (Woodbridge: 1998), 1–45 and Keynes, “Mercia and Wessex in the Ninth Century,” *Mercia: An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, ed. Michelle P. Brown and Carol A. Farr (London: 2001), 310–328.

the vernacular versions.¹²⁶ In the case of the *Pastoral Care*, the most forceful argument against such an interpretation is the unequivocal statement in the Prose Preface, written in Alfred's own voice, that he translated the text in person, aided by his scholarly helpers: "swæ swæ ic hie geliornade æt Plegmunde minum ærcebiscepe [ond] æt Assere minum biscepe [ond] æt Grimbolde minum mæsseprioste [ond] æt Iohanne minum mæssepreoste" ("as I learnt it from Plegmund my archbishop, and Asser my bishop, and Grimbald my mass-priest and John my mass-priest," 7.20–22). It has therefore sometimes been assumed that the share these helpers had in the translation was considerable,¹²⁷ but it should be borne in mind that three of them, Asser, Grimbald and John the Old Saxon, were not native speakers of English. It therefore seems implausible that they should have suggested translations into Old English, even if they had acquired a working knowledge of the language. In addition, charter evidence suggests that these scholars spent long periods away from court.¹²⁸ Of Asser we know that he spent only six-monthly intervals at court.¹²⁹

It is far more likely that the role of these scholars, perhaps taking turns, consisted in orally explaining and paraphrasing difficult Latin passages.¹³⁰ The traces of such an involvement of different helpers can perhaps be detected in the increasing frequency and precision with which biblical passages are identified in the course of the translation. Whereas in the first 32 chapters, such identifications are rather imprecise and rare, they become more specific in Chapters 42 to 52, and from Chapter 53, the books of Genesis are identified and psalm numbers are added.¹³¹ Besides, the epithet *se wisa* "the wise" is used for Solomon at the beginning and towards the end of the translation, whereas in Chapters 35, 36 and 38, *Salomon se snotttra* is found.¹³²

126 E.g. Malcolm Godden, "Did King Alfred Write Anything?," *Medium Ævum* 76 (2007): 1–23. This thesis is refuted by Pratt, "Problems of Authorship" and by Patrick Wormald, "Living with King Alfred." See also the appendix in this volume and Janet M. Bately in this volume, Chapter 4, "Alfred as Author and Translator."

127 See, for example, C.L. Wrenn, *A Study of Old English Literature* (London: 1967), 218. Potter, "Relation," 55 and Potter, "Pastoral Care," 119–120.

128 See K&L, 26.

129 See Pratt, *Political Thought*, 57.

130 Asser describes his task as *recitare* to the king whatever books he wanted to hear; see *Asser's Life*, ch. 81, ed. Stevenson, 87.10–14.

131 See Potter, "Pastoral Care," 119–20; Brown, "Method," 679, n. 14, and Clement, "Production," 133–134.

132 See Elmar Seebold, "Die ae. Entsprechungen von lat. *sapiens* und *prudens*," *Anglia* 92 (1974): 291–333, at 307.

Apart from this variation, which may be attributed to the king's helpers, there is no evidence for the influence of different collaborators on the language and style of the Old English text. The lexemes used to translate frequent Latin lemmata show no significant variation in the course of the text.¹³³ In studies investigating the use of synonyms in several semantic fields no change of lexical preferences has been detected, and the distribution of lexemes typical of the Alfredian corpus is fairly even in all parts of the text.¹³⁴

Similarly, no differences in the method or precision of the translation have been noted.¹³⁵ However, one case of delegation may be detected in the treatment of the chapter headings. The Latin original probably contained only a list of chapter headings at the beginning; these are identical with the first sentence of each chapter. In the Old English translation, this list was obviously used to supply headings for the individual chapters in the body of the text. These headings contain errors and unusual interpretations of the Latin which are not repeated in the (originally identical) opening sentences of the respective chapters.¹³⁶ One explanation for this could be the king's increasing translation skills. Another reason could be that the original list at the beginning was supplied by another scholar and later mechanically copied in the appropriate places in the finished translation.¹³⁷ The case for this possibility can be strengthened by the fact that some words which occur in the chapter headings are untypical of the works of Alfred.¹³⁸

Alfred's Translation in Late Anglo-Saxon England

It is amply attested that the *Pastoral Care* continued to be read and used in Anglo-Saxon England right to the end of the period and beyond. MSS U and T

133 See Clement, "Production," 150, n. 20 and Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 48, n. 57.

134 See Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 48 and n. 57; and Janet M. Bately's contribution to this volume and references given there. The unity of the Alfredian corpus is also underlined by a consistent use of metaphors; see Wilcox, "Metaphors," 210.

135 See Wack, *Verhältnis*, 56–57, and Moye, "Alfred's Method," xi and n. 4.

136 See, for example, ch. 16, where *contemplatione suspensus* is mistranslated in the list of *tituli* and the heading, but correctly rendered in 97.23; another example is ch. 59, where the list and heading show an interpretation different from that of the first sentence in the text (447.26–28).

137 See Janet M. Bately, "Book Divisions and Chapter Headings in the Translations of the Alfredian Period," in *Early Medieval English Texts and Interpretations: Studies Presented to Donald G. Scragg*, ed. Elaine Treharne and Susan Rosser, *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 252 (Tempe, AZ: 2002), 151–66, esp. at 159–160.

138 See Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 48–49.

contain a revision of the text which must have been completed by the second half of the tenth century, the terminus *ante quem* being established by the earliest suggested date for MS T.¹³⁹ Since there is no trace of a fresh comparison to a Latin exemplar, it must have been the language of the translation which was considered to be in need of updating. Apart from the influence of the scribes' own dialect in the sphere of phonology and orthography, a deliberate choice of syntactic alterations and additions, and above all vocabulary replacements bear testimony to the linguistic changes that must have taken place in the span of not more than a hundred years.

A considerable number of lexical items were thus replaced, possibly because of their Anglian dialect colouring.¹⁴⁰ Numerous errors reveal that the revisor apparently failed to understand rare vocabulary and tried to make sense of the sentence by replacing the words in question with phonetically similar ones. In other cases, lexical replacements may be due to different stylistic choices within West Saxon. Originally an interlined version of the Early West Saxon translation, this revision was integrated into the body of the text in the later exemplars.

In spite of its obvious shortcomings, the revision bears testimony to an intensive study and continuing use of the English translation. It was Alfred's text that was consulted, not Gregory's original, long after Latin learning had reached a superior standard during the Benedictine reform. The two most prominent eleventh-century authors, Ælfric of Eynsham and Wulfstan, the homilist, studied the preface to the Old English *Pastoral Care* intensively—and hence probably also the translation.¹⁴¹

Conclusion

As we have seen, not only the Prose Preface to the *Pastoral Care*, but also the translation itself must be considered a key text for the understanding of King Alfred's reform plans. By according this central role to Gregory's book, Alfred continued the practice of his eighth-century English predecessors, but also

139 See Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 162–83.

140 For details, see Schreiber, *King Alfred's Translation*, 167 and commentary.

141 On Ælfric's use of the *Pastoral Care*, see Malcolm Godden, "Ælfric and the Alfredian Precedents," in *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. H. Magennis and M. Swan, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 18 (Leiden: 2009), 139–164; on Wulfstan's corrections in the preface of MS H, see Timothy Graham, "The Opening of King Alfred's Preface to the Old English *Pastoral Care*: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 20," *OEN* 38 (2005): 43–50, at 46.

responded to the contemporary Carolingian reception of the text: Throughout the centuries, the *Regula pastoralis* had been the inspiration for ambitious reform programmes on both sides of the Channel.

The work influenced thoroughly King Alfred's perception of the role of kingship, which is clearly modelled on the Gregorian *pastor*-ruler. The king's personal pursuit of wisdom led him to accept the role of educator of his people, and to approach with confidence his task of translation, adapting the Gregorian text to the altered contextual needs of a ninth-century audience.¹⁴²

At the same time, the surviving manuscripts let us glean the mechanics of the reform. We can observe an impressive collaborative effort in the distribution of copies, in which apparently an effective scriptorium working at the king's command was involved. And last, but not least, the language of the oldest surviving copies bears testimony to the political climate of Alfred's reign. Responding to the common Viking threat, the increasing integration of formerly separate political unities seems to have been mirrored by the development of a common identity and dialect, which can be traced in the linguistic features of the translation. The Old English *Pastoral Care* is therefore an impressive manifest of the king's achievement; it is tangible proof of the fact that the ambitious reform plan outlined in Alfred's famous preface was indeed put to practice.

142 For Alfred's pursuit of wisdom, see Smythe, "King Alfred's Translation." On Ælfric's attitude towards the Alfredian translations, see Godden, "Alfredian Precedents."

The Old English *Boethius*¹

Nicole Guenther Discenza

Alfred the Great's Old English *Boethius* must have challenged Anglo-Saxon audiences as it continues to challenge modern readers. More controversies surround the *Boethius* than this chapter can engage. The question of Alfred the Great's involvement in the translation, and whether the same translator rendered both prose and meters, both face renewed debate.² Problems of sources have been treated in great detail by many scholars and so will receive little discussion here.³ This creative adaptation of the sixth-century Latin *De consolatione philosophiae* (*The Consolation of Philosophy*) by Boethius takes different forms in the two surviving manuscripts.

This chapter will focus on the form and content of those versions, one prose (B) and the other prosimetrum (C). Virtually all the prose sections in C replicate large portions of B with relatively little variation. The C Meters of Boethius exhibit much greater freedom from B but still feature much of the same lexicon and overwhelmingly the same imagery and concepts. The two Old English texts share significant features. Both are dialogues, adding dramatic flair to sometimes abstract queries. Both enliven the allegorical exchange by providing multiple perspectives on the two interlocutors: the *ic* or first-person narrator sometimes seems an everyman for audience identification, but at other points he seems to be the historical Boethius. Wisdom appears primarily as a

1 Thanks to Paul E. Szarmach and Susan Irvine for their comments and suggestions on this chapter. Any remaining errors are solely mine.

2 See Janet M. Bately's chapter, Chapter 4, on "Alfred as Author and Translator" in this volume; and the appendix on authorship, 397–415. See also the section on the Meters in *The Old English Boethius: An Edition of the Old English Versions of Boethius's De Consolatione Philosophiae*, ed. Malcolm Godden and Susan Irvine with Mark Griffith and Rohini Jayatilaka, 2 vols. (Oxford: 2009), vol. 1, 146–151, which persuasively argues that the translator of the Meters was not the translator of the prose.

3 Godden and Irvine's excellent Commentary to the *Boethius* incorporates much earlier scholarship on sources and adds extensive quotations from the largely unpublished early Latin commentaries surrounding the *Consolation*. Godden's team is currently editing ninth-through eleventh-century commentaries: see "Boethius in Early Medieval Europe: Commentary on *The Consolation of Philosophy* from the 9th to the 11th Centuries," <http://www.english.ox.ac.uk/boethius/index.html>. See also Rosalind Love's chapter in this volume, Chapter 3, "Latin Commentaries on Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*."

masculine figure but sometimes as the feminine “Gesceadwisnes,” and the text ultimately connects this figure to the divine. After attending to the form and characterization of the dialogues, the chapter will turn to substance. The *Boethius* presents a powerful synthesis of classical, late antique, and Anglo-Saxon literary forms and techniques. It explores practical and theoretical philosophy, with particular interest in hierarchies, both earthly and divine. The *Boethius* ultimately establishes a combined model that ranks priorities and beings from lowest to highest.⁴ The chapter concludes with evidence for later readers’ engagements with the text into the Middle English era.

Forms

Manuscript B (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 180) dates to the late eleventh or early twelfth century and contains a complete prose rendering of the *Consolation*, though the Latin source text alternates prose passages with poems. The *Boethius* is the only text in this manuscript, aside from a scribe’s brief closing prayer.⁵ Manuscript C (London, BL, Cotton Otho A.vi) contains a tenth-century copy of a prosimetrical version.⁶ Here, most of the Latin meters appear in Old English alliterative verse (regardless of their Latin metrical forms, which varied). The Latin prose portions and a few meters (or parts thereof) appear as Old English prose. MS C burned in 1731 and was painstakingly pieced back together in the nineteenth century.⁷ Francis Junius transcribed the C Meters

4 Godden argues that the text’s “philosophy remains otherworldly,” “The Player King: Identification and Self-Representation in King Alfred’s Writings,” in *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences*, ed. Timothy Reuter (Aldershot, UK: 2003), 137–150, at 145.

5 For MS B, see Godden and Irvine’s *Boethius*, Commentary, vol. 1, 9–18. For the prayer, see Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 9, and vol. 2, 496–497; and Bately, “The Alfredian Canon Revisited,” in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Timothy Reuter, 107–120, at 117–119.

6 MS C is a composite manuscript with a late twelfth-century copy of Aelred of Rievaulx’s Latin *vita* of Edward the Confessor and a mid-thirteenth-century copy of a text about a pilgrimage to Edward’s shrine; see Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 18–24. When the later texts were added remains uncertain.

7 For the damage, see Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 19–20 and their notes. Susan Irvine, “Fragments of *Boethius*: The Reconstruction of the Cotton Manuscript of the Alfredian Text,” *ASE* 34 (2005): 169–181, demonstrates where fragments misplaced in the reconstruction belong. See also Kevin Kiernan’s “Alfred the Great’s Burnt *Boethius*,” *The Iconic Page in Manuscript, Print, and Digital Culture*, ed. George Bornstein and Theresa Tinkle (Ann Arbor, MI: 1998), 7–32; and his “Remodeling Alfred’s *Boethius* with the *tol ond andweorc* of Edition

and many differences between the B and C prose texts before the fire, and his transcript (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 12) remains a valuable witness to MS C.⁸ Finally, A.S. Napier published the transcript of a subsequently lost fragment of the *Boethius* in 1886.⁹ The existence of two distinct forms of one text has perplexed a series of editors, who generally either edited the prose text and relegated the Meters of Boethius to the back of the book, or edited only the Meters. Most editors use the C prose and sometimes C verse to emend MS B, which has frequent scribal errors.¹⁰ The new edition of *The Old English Boethius* by Malcolm Godden and Susan Irvine presents MS B and MS C separately.

The B text's prose-only form appears to be the earlier version. Not only does the prose preface to the *Boethius* claim the prose rendering came first, but Mark Griffith and others have also found evidence that the Meters of Boethius rely heavily on the prose versions of the Meters and very little on other sources.¹¹ B contains 42 chapters; the logic of the divisions is unclear. Chapters vary in length from seven to 371 lines in the edition and contain as little as part of one or as many as six Latin prose sections.¹² Four times, a new chapter begins in Old English where a section continues in Latin. Moreover,

Production Technology (EPT)," in *Making Sense: Constructing Meaning in Early English*, ed. Antonette diPaolo Healey and Kevin Kiernan, Publ. of the Dictionary of Old English 7 (Toronto: 2007), 72–115.

8 See Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 24–34.

9 For the Napier Fragment, see Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 34–41. Kiernan notes anomalies in the transcript and questions whether the fragment actually existed in "The Source of the Napier Fragment of Alfred's *Boethius*," *Digital Medievalist* 1.1 (Spring 2005), <http://www.digitalmedievalist.org/article.cfm?RecID=5>.

10 For previous editions, see Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 215–225; for scribal errors in MS B, see vol. 1, 226–227.

11 See "The Composition of the Metres," Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 80–134; and Paul E. Szarmach, "Thirty-One Meters." "...un tuo serto di fiori in man recando": *Scritti in onore di Maria Amalia D'Aronco*, ed. Silvana Serafin and Patrizia Lendinara, 2 vols (Udine: 2008), vol. 2, 409–425. The Prose Preface to the *Boethius*, paradoxically, discusses the prosimetric version while heading the prose-only version. Junius's transcription attests that the Prose Preface appeared in MS C, but that portion burned entirely. One can accept the Alfredian attribution of the *Boethius* but reject the attribution of the preface to Alfred himself: see Allen J. Frantzen, "The Form and Function of the Preface in the Poetry and Prose of Alfred's Reign," *Alfred the Great*, ed. Reuter, 121–136; my "Alfred the Great and the Anonymous Prose Proem to the *Boethius*," *JEGP* 107 (2008): 57–76; and Irvine's "Alfredian Prefaces and Epilogues" in this volume, especially 160–164.

12 For relations among sections of B, C, and the Latin source text, see Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 233–235.

the *Boethius* notes the endings of Books Two (B 21.48–50 and CM 11.103–4), Three (35.255 and CP 23.57), and Four (40.72 and CP 30.73), but the latter note comes in the middle of a chapter in B (though not C), and the end of Book One goes unmarked. Sometimes speech tags signalling a change of mode or speaker start a new chapter; sometimes they end one, and the song or speech starts the next chapter. Either the author had little interest in consistent chapter divisions, or, more likely, scribes created the chapter structure of the B text.¹³ The translation may at first have had only book divisions, and perhaps not even all of those.

MS C presents a clearer structure with regular alternation of prose and poetry into thirty-one Meters and thirty-three Prose sections.¹⁴ Latin Books 1 and 5 are both abridged in C (as in B), combining and omitting sections. For the middle three books, however, C generally devotes one prose section to each Latin prose section and one Meter to each Latin Meter.¹⁵ This prosimetrum form is the most striking feature of the C version. Though the word “prosimetrum” itself dates to the twelfth century, it is a useful term for earlier works.¹⁶ Early medieval audiences knew little of the genre’s Greek and classical Latin roots, but two influential late antique works transmitted the genre: Martianus

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- 13 The changes in chapter structure as the text progresses suggest that the chapter divisions are scribal, though they must date back to a copy prior to B. See Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 233–235; and Bately, “Book Divisions and Chapter Headings in the Translations of the Alfreðian Period,” in *Early Medieval English Texts and Interpretations: Studies Presented to Donald G. Scragg*, ed. Elaine Treharne and Susan Rosser, *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 252 (Tempe, AZ: 2002), 151–166, esp. 157–161 and 165–166.
 - 14 Szarmach notes in “Thirty-One Meters” that these 31 OE meters represent only 30 of the 39 Latin meters, the first OE meter giving “back story” (415) from the *vitae* that preface many Latin manuscripts of the *De consolatio*ne. Three meters appear in the prose but not in the Meters; the other six are not rendered in either version (see Szarmach, “Thirty-One Meters,” 411–412 and 420–423). There are also 39 Latin prose sections; some have been combined in the Old English (see next note).
 - 15 The exceptions are CP 5, which combines II.pr.1, II.pr.2 (omitting II.m.1), a prose version of II.m.2, and II.pr.3; CM 23 and CP 23, which break III.m.12 into a short verse and then a prose retelling of the Orpheus meter; and CP 30, which combines IV.pr.7 with a prose version of IV.m.7. *Anicii Manlii Severini Boethii Philosophiae Consolatio*, ed. Ludwig Bieler, CCL 94 (Turnholt: 1957). For the omissions of Latin meters, see Szarmach, “Thirty-One Meters.”
 - 16 Early authors often called these mixtures “satura.” Jan Ziolkowski’s “Prosimetrum in Classical Tradition,” *Prosimetrum: Crosscultural Perspectives on Narrative in Prose and Verse*, ed. J. Harris and K. Reichl (Suffolk: 1997), 45–65, informed much of this paragraph. See also Peter Dronke, *Verses with Prose From Petronius to Dante: The Art and Scope of the Mixed Form* (Cambridge, MA: 1994).

Capella's *Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, a medieval school text; and the *De consolacione philosophiae*. Late antique and early medieval Latin introduced a new genre: the *opus geminatum* or "twinned work."¹⁷ Aldhelm used it for his *De virginitate*, Bede for his lives of St. Cuthbert, and Alcuin for his lives of Willibrord.¹⁸ The vernacular did not have as strong a tradition of prosimetry or *opera geminata* as Latin had. Some mixing or doubling of genres can be found, but mostly later than the *Boethius*. *Solomon and Saturn* in CCC 422 moves from poetry to prose and back to poetry, but authorship and dates are uncertain.¹⁹ The primarily prose *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* incorporates several poems, but in entries after Alfred's time.²⁰

In rendering the *Consolation* into Old English, then, Alfred and his helpers did not create a new form but translated a Latin one into the vernacular. C presents the most consistent alternation of prose and verse in early English vernacular. Much like its Latin source, the prosimetrical *Boethius* uses poetry to repeat, develop, and ornament the argument of the prose text.²¹ Philosophical points are typically made in prose first, then illustrated in poetry. B renders the entire text in prose, but it has the same imagery from the Latin Meters that C renders as verse.

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- 17 Rachel Anderson locates its origins in Caelius Sedulius; see "Saints' Legends," in R.D. Fulk and Christopher M. Cain, *A History of Old English Literature* (Malden, MA: 2003), 87–105, at 89.
 - 18 Mechthild Gretsch notes in *Ælfric and the Cult of Saints in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, CSASE 34 (Cambridge: 2005), that Bede's prose account of Æthelthryth and hymn to her constitute "an *opus geminatum* en miniature" (213) whose form Ælfric does not adopt. See also Paul E. Szarmach on Bede's account of Ætheldreda as "a 'poor man's' *opus geminatum*" (139) and how the OE translator compensates for the loss of poetry in "Ætheldreda in the *Old English Bede*," *Poetry, Place, and Gender: Studies in Medieval Culture in Honor of Helen Damico*, ed. Catherine Karkov (Kalamazoo: 2009), 132–150.
 - 19 See Daniel Anlezark, ed. and trans., *The Old English Dialogues of Solomon and Saturn* (Cambridge, UK: 2009), particularly the section on "Date and Authorship," 49–57. Anlezark suggests authorship by Dunstan or his circle and a rough date of c. 920–930.
 - 20 See Renée Trilling, "Thinking about Form: The Chronicle as *prosimetrum*," 180–186, in her *Aesthetics of Nostalgia: Historical Representation in Old English Verse* (Toronto: 2007). Bede's Latin *Historia ecclesiastica* includes a few poems, but its OE translation omits nearly all the poems, though it adds *Cædmon's Hymn*; see my "Old English Bede and the Construction of Anglo-Saxon Authority," *ASE* 31 (2002): 69–80; and Szarmach, "The Poetic Turn of Mind of the Translator of the OE Bede," *Anglo Saxons: Studies presented to Cyril Roy Hart*, ed. Simon Keynes and Alfred P. Smyth (Dublin: 2006), 54–68.
 - 21 See Gerard O'Daly's *Poetry of Boethius* (Chapel Hill: 1991) for a full-length treatment of the Latin Meters, and John Marenbon, *Boethius*, Great Medieval Thinkers (Oxford: 2003), especially Chapter 8, for the workings of the meters in the *Consolation* as a whole.

Both B and C texts retain the dialogue structure of the Latin text. Again, the form is not new; philosophical dialogues date back to the Book of Job and the works of Plato.²² The dialogue form in the OE *Boethius*, as in Latin, adds dramatic tension to what might otherwise be dry philosophical discourse.²³ The issues are never simply abstract or hypothetical; the narrator's questions and complaints bear directly on a real imprisonment that readers know will end with the death of Boethius.²⁴ The Latin text establishes the emotional situation at the outset with a Meter wherein the narrator bewails his misfortune. Philosophy then seeks to move Boethius beyond emotional confusion into an intellectual understanding and a spiritual engagement that transcend the material world. She appears unmoved by his laments (I.pr.v.1), even saying that she cannot bear his complaints (II.pr.iv.11). Philosophy succeeds, and Boethius makes his last emotional objections in Book 5, Prose 3 and Meter 3, where he worries that God's foreknowledge deprives human beings of free will and makes reward and punishment a sham.²⁵ After answering the narrator's concerns in Book 5, Prose 4, Philosophy speaks for the remainder of the book; through the remaining two meters and two prose sections later, she leads Boethius through a purely philosophical discourse and closes the work with a prayer.²⁶

Despite the direct relevance of the philosophical issues to the prisoner's life, the Latin frequently makes its arguments in third person or impersonal terms. The Old English often uses first and second person expressions to make the dialogue more personal and dramatic. For example, Alfred adds "þonne ic secge" ("then I say," B24.52/CP 12.51) to an impersonal passage in the source text (III.pr.2.9). In other places, second person addresses replace the language of logic and a third person subjunctive.²⁷ Finally, at the end of the *Consolation*,

22 Anglo-Saxon dialogues include Alcuin's *Dialogus Franconis et Saxonis de octo partibus orationis*, Ælfric of Eynsham's *Colloquy*, and the work of Ælfric Bata; Wærferth's translation of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* into Old English also kept the form.

23 For more on dialogue and personal interaction in the *Boethius*, see my *King's English: Strategies of Translation in the Old English Boethius* (Albany, NY: 2005), 70–77.

24 See Godden, "The Player King," 139–140, and also Love's chapter on "Latin Commentaries," Chapter 3 in this volume.

25 O'Daly notes that V.m.3 marks progress from the narrator's earliest, self-indulgent meter, but that he "still needs the guidance of Philosophy. His anguished questions are all too human and expose a blindness that is in no sense culpable, but none the less must be transcended and overcome," *The Poetry of Boethius*, 41; see 175–176 for further discussion of the meter.

26 For V.m.4 and V.m.5, see O'Daly, *The Poetry of Boethius*, 176–177.

27 See, for instance, III.pr.5.7 and B 29.27–30/CP 15.27–29, and III.pr.11.4 and B 34.214–16/CP 21.7–9; see also my *King's English*, 71.

Philosophy speaks 266 lines of Latin prose (in Bieler's edition) and 55 lines of Latin verse after the last response by Boethius except for the single word "Minime" ("not at all," V.pr.vi.19). In the Old English, however, the narrator is still querying Wisdom less than 40 lines before the end of the text. He asks his last question at B 42.23 (CP 33.24); the text ends at B 42.55 (CP 33.55). The Latin transcends the dialogue frame, but the Old English maintains it.²⁸

The Old English also adds action and description to enliven the dialogue. A few times, the translator adds "smearcian" ("smile") or "wundrian" ("wonder") to a speech tag.²⁹ Wisdom pauses to think more often than Philosophy does. Philosophy falls silent at II.pr.1.1: "Post haec paulisper obticuit atque ubi attentionem meam modesta taciturnitate collegit sic exorsa est."³⁰ The Old English uses the silence a little differently: "ƿa geswigode se wisdom ane lytle hwile oððæt he ongeat ƿæs modes ingeƿances. ƿa he hi ƿa ongiten hæfde, ƿa cwæð he."³¹ Another time, both texts have a silence for Philosophy/Wisdom to gather her or his own thoughts.³² The Old English texts, however, add other moments of silence at B 39.15 (CP 28.1), 39.79–80 (CP 29.1–2), and 41.10–11 (CP 32.1–2), where the Latin indicates no pause. On all three of these occasions, it is not Wisdom but the narrator who breaks the silence.

Wisdom also shows more emotional range than his Latin counterpart. He sometimes speaks more harshly to the narrator than Philosophy does to her interlocutor, yet he offers a sense of camaraderie not found in the Latin text.³³ Philosophy seems to know everything, but Wisdom occasionally suggests that he too must work towards full understanding. At one point in the Latin,

28 The overall number of turns each speaker takes varies little; see my *King's English*, 22. However, the placement of speaking turns has changed slightly due to the abridgement of the final sections in OE and the addition of responses from the narrator. I thus modify my statement in *The King's English* that the narrator remains "as active as in the Latin, but no more so overall" (22): the changes at the end keep the narrator an active participant in OE where he has ceased to be one in Latin.

29 See B 34.253/CP 21.47, 34.342/CP 21.136 (the latter lost and based on B), B 35.111/CP 22.81, and B 40.26/CP 31.27. The "smearcian" at B 39.84/CP 29.6 translates the Latin "arridens" (IV.pr.6.2); the Latin has its own touches of characterization. For "wundrian" where no such verb appears in Latin, see B 35.109/CP 22.78 (from B), B 38.212/CP 27.162, and B 40.13/CP 30.13.

30 "After these [verses] she fell silent for a little while and thus drew my attention by her modest quiet, then began." Translations are my own unless otherwise specified.

31 B 7.1–2/CP 5.1–2: "Then Wisdom fell silent for a little while until he understood the mind's innermost thoughts. When he had understood them, then he said."

32 III.pr.2.1 in the Latin, B 24.1–3/CP 12.1–3.

33 For Wisdom's harshness, see my *King's English*, 72–73.

Philosophy says, “Quo fit ut, tametsi uobis hunc ordinem minime considerare ualentibus confusa omnia perturbataque uideantur, nihilo minus tamen suus modus ad bonum dirigens cuncta disponat.”³⁴ The Old English changes the second person to first person plural, which it uses four times in this passage: “Ac se godcunda foreþonc hit understent eall swiðe ryhte, þeah *us* ðince for *urum* dysige þæt hit [on] woh fare; forþam *we* ne cunnon þæt riht understandan. He demð þeah eall swiðe ryhte, þeah *us* hwilum swa ne þince.”³⁵ The first person pronoun aligns Wisdom in solidarity with the narrator on his quest for truth.³⁶

Drama and characterization help maintain reader interest through difficult philosophical arguments and demonstrate the relevance of philosophy to a real, individual life.³⁷ As Peter Dronke notes, the work does not merely discuss its topics: “What arouses our curiosity as readers or listeners is the *manner* in which they act...”³⁸ The *Boethius* complicates the characterization by identifying both major figures in multiple ways. The name “Boeties” (“Boethius”) appears in the first chapter, which offers background before the dialogue proper begins, but the translator also uses it in the body of the text ten times. (not counting references to Boethius as author at book breaks)³⁹ This name gives the character historical specificity: Anglo-Saxons knew him as both author and Christian martyr. The character is not called Boethius after

34 IV.pr.vi.21: “As it happens, even if all things seem to you, who are not at all strong enough to consider this order, confused and chaotic, nevertheless, for each thing, its own way disposes it towards the good.”

35 Emphasis added, B 39.21–14 (CP 29.133–36): “But the divine foreknowledge comprehends it all very rightly, though it seems to *us* in *our* foolishness that it goes badly; for *we* cannot understand the right. He, however, judges all very rightly, though sometimes it does not seem so to *us*.”

36 Godden and Irvine read the attribution of apparent ignorance to Wisdom as a mistake, vol. 2, 468.

37 Godden writes that the translator also uses dialogue as “a way of capturing an imagined debate between different perspectives and world-pictures” and to show readers “that this is challenging material that ought to provoke and puzzle,” “The Alfredian Project and its Aftermath: Rethinking the Literary History of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries,” Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture, 15 January 2009, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 162 (2009): 93–122, at 110.

38 Dronke, *Verses with Prose*, 38, referring to Martianus Capella’s *De nuptiis*, but Dronke adds immediately thereafter, “This is true in a more far-reaching way of Boethius’ *Consolation*,” 38.

39 See B 1.12 and C Meter 1.52 and 75 for background. “Boeties” then appears at B 3.1 and 10 (CP 2.1 and 9, but reconstructed from B); 10.1/CP 6.1, B 26.19/CP 13.19, B 26.23/CP 13.23, B 26.31/CP 13.30, B 26.33/CP 13.33, B 26.36/C13.35, B 27.27/CP 14.27, and B 27.41/CP 14.40–41. For the *Boethius*’s biography of Boethius, see Godden’s “King and Counselor.”

Chapter 27 (CP 14), which is less than halfway through the text.⁴⁰ The character is also identified as “Mod” (“Mind”) nearly thirty times between Chapters 3 and 24 (CP 2–12). The name *Mod* presents an allegorical figure, making the dialogue internal. *Mod* offers more possibility for reader identification: where *Boethius* names a specific, now-dead historical figure, we each have our own *mod*.

The most pervasive identification of the protagonist, however, simply uses the first-person pronoun, “ic,” starting in Chapter 22 (CP 11). Not counting the character referring to himself in dialogue, the *Boethius* calls the protagonist “ic” or “me” almost 150 times, usually in dialogue tags such as “Pa cwæð ic” (“Then I said,” B 26.42/CP 13.41–42). Occasionally tags position the protagonist as the recipient of speech: “Ða andsworode he me and cwæð.”⁴¹ The use of first-person pronoun for the protagonist begins while the translator still uses *Mod* and *Boethius*, but a few chapters after the first-person pronoun has been introduced as an identifier, the translator drops the other two names. The text shifts away from identifying the main character as a historical or an allegorical figure into a more universal mode of reference, inviting readers to put themselves in the place of Wisdom’s interlocutor.

The *Boethius* names Wisdom more consistently, but that figure too displays different facets. The Latin text rarely names *Philosophia*; instead, it uses feminine pronouns and third-person verbs for her, while Boethius receives masculine pronouns and first-person verbs. The Old English, however, often employs verbs with identical first and third person forms, and it sometimes refers to the Boethius-figure in third person. Thus the OE needs to name Philosophy to distinguish the dialogue’s participants. “Wisdom” was perhaps the closest English equivalent in the late ninth century, and Alfred uses that term as a name throughout the text.⁴² Another seven times he substitutes “Gesceadwisnes” (“reason” or “discernment”), and six times he uses both names: “se wisdom and seo gesceadwisnes.”⁴³ In the *Consolation*, Boethius describes Philosophy as a woman.⁴⁴ The noun “wisdom” is masculine in Old English, but, as Susan Irvine notes, Wisdom is characterized as a mother where Philosophy was figured as a

40 There are 42 chapters, but some of the later chapters are quite long. For the characterization of Mod/Boethius/ic, see also Godden’s “Player King.”

41 B 35.87–88/CP 22.58: “Then he answered me and said.”

42 See Bately, “Upwita/Philosophus Revisited: A Reflection on OE Usage,” in *Essays on Anglo-Saxon and Related Themes in Memory of Lynne Grundy*, ed. J. Roberts and J. Nelson (London: 2000), 16–36, at 23–24.

43 3.27, 5.2, 10.9–10, 11.1, 13.1, and 14.4–5, with minor variations in wording and spelling.

44 For more on the characterization of Philosophy in the Latin, see Dronke, *Verse with Prose*, 38–41.

nurse.⁴⁵ Such variation invites readers to consider the character in a variety of frames. The word “wisdom” occurs more than 850 times in Old English, in poetry, prose, and glosses, ranging from the Riddles and *Beowulf* to saints’ lives, homilies, and even charters. “Gesceadwis” and “gesceadwisnes” are less common, appearing under 230 times and confined almost completely to religious prose. The sentiment “seo gesceadwisnes...is synderlic cræft þære saule” is added to the Latin prose; the C Meter praises this virtue even more highly: “Hio is þæt mæste mægen monnes saule / and se selesta sundorcræfta.”⁴⁶ Wisdom is sometimes called “heofencund Wisdom”: “heavenly Wisdom” or “Wisdom from heaven.”⁴⁷ Near the end, Wisdom says, “se wisdom is God” (“this wisdom is God,” B 41.113/CP 32.105). Thus Wisdom appears as interlocutor, then as a capacity of the human soul, and finally as God himself. Wisdom and reason are also figured as both masculine and feminine. The *Boethius* encourages audiences to make a variety of identifications and connections with wisdom and reason, even identifying with God himself.

It also eases a difficult discourse by incorporating some material from Latin commentaries, not just the main text, as Rosalind Love showed in her chapter earlier in this volume.⁴⁸ Such changes range from brief explanations and identifications of people and places to higher-level matters of interpretation where the *Boethius* agrees with Latin commentaries in “distinctive interpretation.”⁴⁹ The metricist seems to have used commentaries very little, however, and the main translator made very selective use. Much material from the commentaries never appears in the *Boethius*, and Alfred keeps a fairly tight focus despite many opportunities for digressions in the text.⁵⁰

45 “Rewriting Women in the Old English *Boethius*,” in *New Windows on a Woman’s World: A Festschrift for Jocelyn Harris*, ed. C. Gibson and L. Marr, 2 vols. (Dunedin, New Zealand: 2005), vol. 2, 488–501, at 489–490.

46 B 33.223–25: “reason...is a special virtue of the soul”; CM 20.202–3: “It is the greatest virtue of the human soul and the best special virtue.” For *cræft* as “virtue,” see my “Power, Skill and Virtue in the Old English *Boethius*,” *ASE* 26 (1997): 81–108.

47 “heofon” is our “heaven”; *The DOE* defines the suffix—*cund*: “of the nature of, derived from.”

48 Chapter 3, “Latin Commentaries.”

49 Love, “Latin Commentaries,” 97. See also Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 54–58; Joseph Wittig’s “King Alfred’s *Boethius* and its Latin Sources: A Reconsideration,” *ASE* 11 (1983): 157–198; and his “‘Remigian’ Glosses on Boethius’s *Consolatio Philosophiae* in Context,” *Source of Wisdom: Old English and Early Medieval Latin Studies in Honour of Thomas D. Hill*, ed. C.D. Wright, F.M. Biggs, and T.N. Hall, Toronto Old English Series 16 (Toronto: 2007), 168–200.

50 For limited use of commentaries in the Meters, see Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 93–95.

Practical and Theoretical Philosophy

Though Anglo-Saxon England had little native tradition of philosophical texts, the Old English *Boethius*, following its Latin source text, does not hesitate to raise difficult issues: the nature of good and evil, the true end of all things, and the problem of free will. The *Boethius* relies more on authority and less on formal logic than its Latin source. In the closing sections, the Old English text treats kinds of knowledge and ways of knowing in far less depth than the *Consolation*. The *Boethius* moreover displays an interest in worldly goods and hierarchies of being that surpasses Latin source text's. A brief outline of the Latin and Old English texts follows.⁵¹

The *Consolation* has five books. In the first, Boethius meets Philosophy, who questions him in order to diagnose his illness. She determines that Boethius has forgotten his identity, true homeland, and the goal towards which all things tend. Book Two shows Fortune to be whimsical, arrogant, and the true owner of almost everything one thinks one possesses. Hardship is salutary, for it demonstrates that these goods are neither permanent nor ours, leading one to seek what endures and what one can truly possess. Philosophy then shows in Book Three that worldly goods are partial, and that one cannot be deprived of true goods. The ultimate, true good is God, who has unity and self-sufficiency.

Book Four relies on the Latin *beatus*, which means both "blessed" and "happy."⁵² True happiness is not a transitory state of mind but an objective reality. Philosophy defines power by its ultimate outcome: the ability to do good is true power. Evil and the ability to do it are nothing. The closer to God and his Providence one comes, the less one feels the ups and downs of daily life. Books Four and Five explore why people suffer different fates that may seem unrelated to their merits. Some become examples of the success of good or the failure of evil; some are tested to their capacity but not beyond. When Boethius questions whether God's foreknowledge allows free will, Philosophy establishes a hierarchy of perception and knowledge. Animals and human beings have senses, but humans also enjoy the superior faculties of imagination and reason. Pure intelligence belongs to God and allows him to see all time at once, so his foreknowledge is not truly knowledge *before* we act, but knowledge

51 This outline is necessarily brief and glosses over difficulties and contradictions within the text; for more detailed examinations, see Marenbon, *Boethius*, and O'Daly, *The Poetry of Boethius*, and their bibliographies.

52 See "beatus," under the headword "beo," Lewis and Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: 1879), 233.

outside of time; it does not determine our actions any more than observing that a person is sitting at a given moment causes her to sit.⁵³ Philosophy ends the work with an exhortation to prayer and virtue, which remove one from the sphere of Fortune and bring one closer to God.

The Old English text follows most of the main lines of argument, although with different emphases. As in the *Consolation*, Wisdom visits a protagonist mourning lost earthly goods (B Chapters 1–3; CM 1–CP 3). Wisdom says the prisoner never really possessed these goods, though they can possess him if he is not careful (B 3–7/CP 3–5.141). Wisdom then reveals the weaknesses of the worldly goods (B 8–20/CP 5.142–CP 10) and how God controls everything (B 21/CM 11). Earthly goods are too partial and fallible to be true goods, and events that reveal their true nature are good (through B 32/CM 19). True good is God, who has unity, lacks nothing, and controls everything; one must seek the true good by seeking God inwardly (B 33–35/CP 19–CM 23). The evil have no true power or happiness (B 36–38/CP 24–27). God controls the heavens and *wyrd* (“fate,” roughly equivalent to Fortune), and Wisdom explains various kinds of fate, as in the Latin text.⁵⁴ Wisdom briefly treats the differing capacities of animals, human beings, angels, and God, and he asserts free will from a simile rather than from logic: as a powerful king has free subjects and not merely slaves, so God has free subjects too (B 39–41/CM 27–31). Wisdom concludes that we must pursue God through virtue and prayer (B 42/CP 33).

The *Consolation* inscribes an ascent from practical to theoretical philosophy early in the text with the description of Philosophy’s clothes: “Harum [vestium] in extremo margine *II* Graecum, in supremo uero *Θ* legebatur intextum atque inter utrasque litteras in scalarum modum gradus quidam insigniti

53 See Rūta Šileikytė’s “In Search of the Inner Mind: Old English *gescead* and Other Lexemes for Human Cognition in King Alfred’s *Boethius*,” *Kalbotyra: Lietuvos TSR Aukstuju Mokyklų Mokslo Darbai* [Vilnius] 54 (2004): 94–102, for detailed treatment of words related to mind and intellect in the Latin and OE texts.

54 For Fate and Fortune, see F. Anne Payne, *King Alfred and Boethius: An Analysis of the Old English Version of the Consolation of Philosophy* (Madison/Milwaukee: 1968); Kurt Otten, *König Alfreds Boethius*, Studien zur englischen Philologie, neue Folge band 3 (Tübingen: 1964); Olga Fischer, “A Comparative Study of the Philosophical Terms in the Alfredian and Chaucerian Boethius,” *Neophilologus* 63 (1979): 622–639; Jerold C. Frakes, *The Fate of Fortune in the Early Middle Ages: The Boethian Tradition*, Studien und Texte zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters band 23 (New York: 1988), and Janet M. Bately, “An Alfredian Legacy? On the Fortunes and Fate of Some Items of Boethian Vocabulary in Old English,” in *From Anglo-Saxon to Early Middle English: Studies Presented to E.G. Stanley*, ed. M. Godden, D. Gray, and T. Hoad (Oxford: 1994), 8–32.

uidebantur, quibus ab inferiore ad superius elementum esset ascensus.”⁵⁵ This ascent from practical to theoretical is the movement of the work as a whole.⁵⁶ B Chapter 3 and CP 2 translate I.pr.1 but omit any description of Wisdom’s clothes. Thus the *Boethius* never declares an explicit ascent from one realm to the other nor divides practical from theoretical philosophy, yet it raises ideas of ascent and hierarchy at many points throughout the text.

The *Consolation* shows little interest in earthly goods, which Philosophy derides as “useless” or “empty” (II.pr.4.3 and II.pr.5.14). None of the goods that nature produces belong to us, and of them “nullum est proprium uobis” (“nothing is proper to you,” II.pr.5.24); to value them too much is to devalue oneself, for one resembles God and not these “uilissima rerum” (“basest of things,” II.pr.5.24–28, at 28). Book Three backtracks a little, for Philosophy says that people do indeed seek the true good, though in the wrong way. These earthly forms of the good are not truly bad, but because they are partial and easily lost, they are not the ultimate good (III.pr.2). Then Philosophy abandons worldly goods altogether, exhorting the protagonist to forsake useless desires and devote himself to the highest good. Late in Book 3, Philosophy reverses yet again to declare that partial goods cannot truly be good *because* they are partial (III.pr.9.16).

The *Boethius* displays the ambivalence towards earthly goods of its source text without partaking in the ultimate rejection of worldly things. Sometimes the *Boethius* denounces earthly goods as empty and false, much as the *Consolation* does. At other times, the *Boethius* ascribes real value to a variety of things in this world, constructing a hierarchy in which the Latin text has no interest. Instead of declaring that a partial good is nothing, the *Boethius* criticizes the seeker who looks in the wrong place (B 33.65–67/CP 19.64–66). In the course of her arguments, the Latin Philosophy casts Fortune as both giver and depriver of worldly things. Philosophy even engages in ventriloquism, speaking as if she were Fortune for much of II.pr.2. The Old English text, however, never shows Fortune as an independent character but simply has Wisdom speak as the giver (B 7.64–68/CP 5.63–67). Godden and Irvine note that the change makes the Old English text more consistent than the Latin, for “this picture of an autonomous Fortuna dispensing human

55 I.pr.1.4: “At the lowest edge of these [clothes] could be read a Greek *II*, and at the highest a *Θ*, and woven between the two were marked rungs on a ladder, by which there was an ascent from the lowest to the highest element.”

56 See Joel C. Relihan, trans., *Boethius: Consolation of Philosophy* (Indianapolis: 2001), 152, note to I Pr 1. Bieler locates the source in Porphyry, who put theoretical philosophy first and practical second; *Anicii Manlii Severini Boethii Philosophiae Consolatio*, 2, note to I.pr.1.4.

fortunes...is before long to be silently abandoned” by the Latin text.⁵⁷ Making Wisdom the one who endows people with worldly goods here seems to ascribe a value to those goods that the Latin text does not. The *Boethius* also avoids the apparent conflict between Fortune and Providence as giver of earthly goods by putting all things under God’s control from the start (B 5.6–9/CP 4.6–8). Wisdom adds, “Ælc soþ wela and soð weorðscipe sindan mine agne þeowas. ...Eala hu yfele me doð manege woruldmenn mid þam þæt ic ne mot wealdan minra agenra [þeawa].”⁵⁸ But what are the true goods? In the *Consolation*, true good is God: unity, self-sufficiency, completeness. In some passages, the *Boethius* declares that earthly goods are flawed or even useless, reflecting the ambivalence found early in the *Consolation*. In others, it attaches real value to worldly things, though it subordinates them to those that transcend this world.

Among the goods rejected by the Latin text are emotions. Boethius writes,

gaudia pelle,
pelle timorem
spemque fugato
nec dolor adsit.⁵⁹

While most people from a variety of beliefs would agree that fear and sadness are bad things, the Latin text’s rejection of joy and hope (“gaudia...spemque”) might shock Christian readers: hope is a theological virtue, not just a worldly pleasure.⁶⁰ The Old English was probably more acceptable to Anglo-Saxon readers:

57 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 2, 279.

58 B 7.77–78, 82–83/ CP 5.76–77. 80–81: “All true goods and true honors are my servants. ... Alas, how much harm many worldly men do me with them that I cannot control my own servants.” Godden and Irvine’s Commentary (vol. 2, 281) and Textual Notes (vol. 2, 203) express uncertainty here about whether Wisdom speaks of *þeowas* (servants) or *þeawas* (customs): ms B has *þeowa*, but C has *þea* with the following letters missing from the fire. Godden and Irvine render the latter sentence “Alas, how badly I am treated by many worldly people, so that I am not allowed to determine my own customs,” vol. 2, 11. Whichever reading one adopts, *Wisdom* grants these things, and they never depart from him, though people can use them perversely. Godden and Irvine also note that the text departs greatly from the Latin here, momentarily presenting Wisdom as something created, one of the “gesceafta” (7.95).

59 I.m.7.25–28: “banish joy, banish fear, and rout hope, nor let sadness remain.”

60 See 1 Corinthians 13:13, R. Weber *et al.*, *Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem* (Stuttgart: 1969), which lists “fides, spes, caritas” as what become known as the theological virtues.

Ac gif ðu wilnige on rihtum geleafan þæt soðe leoht oncnawan, afyr fram þe ða yfelan sælþa and þa unnettan, and eac ða unnettan ungesælþa and þone yflan ege þisse worulde; þæt is þæt þu þe ne anhebbe on ofermetto on þinre gesundfulnesse and on ðinre orsorgnesse, ne eft þe ne geortrywe nanes godes on nanre wiðerweardnesse, forðam þæt mod siemle bið gebunden mid gedrefednesse þær þissa twega yfela auðer ricsað.⁶¹

The *Boethius* rejects specifically those felicities that are evil and useless, not all emotions. The corresponding C Meter expands the passage to over twenty lines of verse (5.24–46) and addresses “idle ofersælþa, unnytne gefean.”⁶² The *hapax legomenon* “ofersælþa,” by its very formation with the prefix “ofer-,” implies that these felicities are excessive ones.

The *Boethius* at times locates positive value in worldly goods, but in almost the same breath it cautions against valuing them too much. Wisdom asks and answers his own question about wealth: “Sege me nu hwæt his þe deorast þince, hwæper þe gold þe hwæt? Ic wat þeah gold. Ac þeah hit nu [god] seo and deore, þeah bið hliseadigra and leofwendra se þe hit selð þonne se ðe hit gaderað and on oðrum reafað.”⁶³ Wisdom allows that gold has worth, though he warns that its value depends on how people acquire and dispose of it.⁶⁴

Power and kingship receive particular scrutiny in the *Boethius*. The *Consolation* specifically specifically considers and rejects power as a good; Philosophy illustrates the futility of earthly power with examples of bad kings. The *Boethius* keeps most of those illustrations and adds more, particularly

61 B 6.11–18: “But if you wish in right belief to know that true light, dispel from yourself the evil felicities and the useless, and also the vain infelicities and the evil fear of this world; that is, do not raise yourself in pride in your health and in your prosperity, nor again despair of any good in any misfortune, because the mind is always bound with cares where either of these two evils reigns.”

62 CM 5.27: “vain excessive felicities, useless joys.”

63 B 13.13–16/CP 7.12–16: “Tell me now which seems to you most precious, gold or something else? I think gold. But though it is now good and precious, he who gives it is more renowned and esteemed than he who gathers and steals it from others.” B actually reads “gold” again instead of “god” (see brackets in quotation), but that reading makes the clause tautological. Junius recorded “god” here from the damaged MS C, whence Godden and Irvine emend.

64 Similarly, Godden and Irvine comment here, “wealth is precious in its own terms and by its own nature. ... This is consonant with [the translator’s] omission of the point in the previous sentence about the worthlessness of wealth,” vol. 2, 299.

references to Theoderic.⁶⁵ Yet the *Boethius* also portrays Cicero, Brutus, and Cato positively and dubs them *heretogas* (“rulers”), though not *cyningas* (“kings”). Where the *Consolation* says that virtue should lead to “reuerentia” (“respect,” III.pr.4.6), Wisdom in the *Boethius* suggests that it should lead to power (B 27.38–44/CP 14.37–43).⁶⁶ The most famous addition to the *Boethius* begins with Mod’s plaint that he never sought power for himself but what he needed “to þam weorce þe me beboden was to wyrcanne.”⁶⁷ Each man must practice his *cræft*, which means both “virtue” and “skill,” and one needs the appropriate material and tools for one’s *cræft*, as Mod explains at length.⁶⁸ Power is dangerous, but such positive language and the attention of a full chapter would hardly be lavished on the king’s exercise of his *cræft* if that exercise had nothing of true good in it. Wisdom responds, “Eala mod eala” (“Alas, Mind, alas,” B 18.2/CP 9.29). He warns against “wilnung *leases* gilpes and *unryhtes* anwealdes and *ungemetlices* hlisan”—not all power or fame, but that which is excessive or for which one is unworthy.⁶⁹

Fame and honor are already invoked in this caution against seeking too much power. As he treats power, so Wisdom treats fame and honor, valuing them but warning of their dangers (B Chapter 18 and CP 9) and noting that even long-lasting fame is nothing when weighed against time without end.⁷⁰ Yet he declares that writers have a duty to record the good practices and deeds of great people, castigating slothful writers who do not (B 76–85 and CP 9.102–10).

Power, honor, fame, and wealth emerge in the *Boethius* as ambivalent goods, things of worth that have their proper place in the world but must not be

65 See B 1.6–25/CM 1.28–72, 16.9/CP 8.9, 27.36–38/CP 14.36–38 (but supplied from B); all references to Theoderic are additions. Nero appears in *Bo* B Chapter 16 (CP 8 and CM 9), B 28/CM 15, and B 29/CP 15, as in *De cons* II.m.6, III.m.4, and III.pr.5. For more about kings, see my *King’s English*, 80–86. For Nero, see O’Daly, *The Poetry of Boethius*, 82–94; and Szarmach, “Alfred’s Nero.”

66 See also B 16.30–31/CP 8.31–32.

67 B 17.5–6/CP 9.5–6: “for that work that I was commanded to do.”

68 For *cræft*, see my “Power, Skill and Virtue.” Godden and Irvine argue that the narrator here “is meant...to be articulating a faulty view,” *Commentary, Boethius*, vol. 2, 316. See also Godden, “Player King,” 142–145. I do not believe that the narrator’s view is entirely undermined but corrected in that he has sometimes sought too much or the wrong kinds of reputation and power.

69 B 18.6–7/CP 9.33–34: “desire for *false* praise and *unrighteous* power and *immoderate* reputation,” emphasis added. Godden and Irvine too note the modifiers here, *Boethius*, vol. 2, 319, though they also refer readers to Wisdom’s critique of desire for good fame at B 18.85–7/CP 9.110–13.

70 B 18.92–101 and CP 9.118–27.

overvalued. Pleasure, the fifth of the *Consolation's* quintet of earthly goods, receives briefer but more negative treatment in the Old English text and seems to lack positive aspects; apparently, the lack of lasting value in physical pleasure seems so obvious that writers need not devote much space to it in Latin or Old English.

The Latin text leaves earthly goods behind, refusing to allow the narrator to subordinate himself to Fortune as “dominam” (“ruler,” II.pr.1.16–19). The Old English *Boethius* cautions Mod against becoming worldly goods’ “þegn,” (“retainer,” B 7.51) or “*heora þegn and hiora hiera*” (“their retainer and their hireling,” CP 5.49–50). To prize worldly goods too highly overturns proper hierarchy. Wisdom says on behalf of the worldly goods: “Þu setst us on þæt setl þines sceoppendes þa þu wilnodest to us þæs godes þe þu him sceoldest.”⁷¹ Earthly things should be at the bottom and God enthroned on top. Wisdom reminds the narrator as early as Chapter 5 that God controls everything. A little later, he declares that God “se hrof is eallra gesælða.”⁷²

Earthly goods occupy the lowest rung on the ladder of goods. In a key passage, Wisdom expresses dismay at the misvaluing of worldly goods by human beings. He even uses the first person plural to align himself with humanity as he pronounces that the good of things does not belong to people and is insignificant compared to the good of a human being (B 13.48–50/CP 7.47–49).⁷³ This passage then expands one in the source text (II.pr.5.8–10) that declares that earthly goods such as gems are God’s creation and have a share of beauty. The *Boethius* follows the Latin in noting that God created jewels, but the *Boethius* goes further as it repeatedly attributes *god*, goodness, to these creations. Instead of devaluing gems, Alfred uses their widely-acknowledged worth to emphasize the even greater value of human goodness, which outshines the sparkle of jewels. If one fails to recognize one’s own goodness, one seeks it in external creations as dumb animals do (B 14.68–76/CP 7.117–24). Thus one obscures the image of the creator in oneself, present in the three-fold capacity of the human soul: understanding, mind, and rational will (B 14.76–80/CP 7.125–29).⁷⁴

71 B 7.133–35 and CP 5.131–33: “You set us on the throne of your creator when you wanted from us the good that you should want from him.” Godden and Irvine note that this “powerful and eloquent argument...owes nothing to DCP or the glosses beyond the general idea of Fortune’s reproaches,” *Boethius*, vol. 2, 284.

72 B 11.59/CP 6.117: “is the pinnacle of all goods.”

73 Godden and Irvine find “a striking resemblance” between this passage and Latin glosses in English manuscripts, *Boethius*, vol. 2, 301.

74 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, translate “gemynd” here as “memory” (*Boethius*, vol. 2, 21) rather than “mind,” per the Augustinian basis of the three-fold soul; see their Commentary,

The Latin text moves away from earthly concerns, disregarding the foot of the ladder in its philosophical ascent. The Old English text never forgets that the rise to heaven begins here on earth. The *Consolation* briefly grants a few goods a certain liminal space, rooted in earth but partaking of the higher good, particularly true friendship.⁷⁵ The *Boethius* expands the twenty-two words of Latin to over 110 words in Old English, saying near the end of the passage “God...hi gecyndelice gesceop to gemagum.”⁷⁶ The *Boethius* does not deny that that these are worldly goods. Indeed, they are “þæt [deorwyrðeste] þyng eallra þissa woruldgesælpā.”⁷⁷ Susan Irvine also notes that just before this passage, the *Boethius* mentions a wife as a sought-after good: “Unlike Boethius, however, he separates out the desire for a wife from the desire for children.”⁷⁸ While Alfred does not explicitly number wives among true friends, listing them here, right before the extended passage on true friends, allows for their inclusion.⁷⁹ Higher still come skills and virtues, united in the word *cræft*.⁸⁰ Not all *cræftas* are virtues, but those that are receive special attention: Wisdom specifically lists prudence, temperance, fortitude, and righteousness as key *cræftas* (B 27.48–49 and CP 14.47–48).⁸¹ The greatest good is God, ultimate source of all the other goods.

The physical universe has its own hierarchy. Again, the ranking originates in the Latin *Consolation*, but the Old English *Boethius* offers more details. In the twenty-eight lines of III.m.9, the *Consolation* describes the order of the universe, seen and unseen, in twenty-one dactylic hexameters: God created the cosmos by joining the four elements and the ternary world-soul, and he governs it continually. The last seven lines of the Latin poem ask God for light and

vol. 2, 304, on the tradition and sources. See also Szarmach, “Alfred, Alcuin, and the Soul,” in *Manuscript, Narrative, Lexicon: Essays on Literary and Cultural Transmissions in Honor of Whitney F. Bolton*, ed. R. Boenig and K. Davis (Bucknell, 2000), 127–148, esp. 127–129.

75 See III.pr.2.9.

76 The entire passage runs B 24.52–63/CP 12.51–61; the quotation is from B 24.55–6/CP 12.54: “God...naturally created them as companions.” The OE “mæg” is generally translated “A relative, kinsman” (Bosworth-Toller 654); Godden and Irvine’s glossary gives “friend, kinsman” (*Boethius*, vol. 2, 577), which seems more to match the sense here of true companions, whether they are blood kin, friends, or members of a household.

77 B 24.52–53 (CP 12.51–52): “the most precious thing of all the worldly goods.”

78 “Rewriting Women,” 497.

79 Irvine, “Rewriting Women,” 497–498.

80 See my “Power, Skill and Virtue.”

81 See Szarmach, “Alfred’s *Boethius* and the Four Cardinal Virtues,” in *Alfred the Wise: Studies in honour of Janet Bately on the Occasion of her sixty-fifth birthday*, ed. J. Roberts and J. Nelson with M.R. Godden (Cambridge: 1997), 223–235.

understanding.⁸² For this meter, B offers a 110-line prose expansion (B 33.142–251); C presents 281 lines of alliterative verse (Meter 20).⁸³ Both Old English passages contrast the unmoving and unchanging God with his always subordinate, movable, changing creation. B begins by praising God's greatness before it works through a series of oppositions and comparisons. The possibilities of anything greater than, or anything as good as, or any good separate from, God are considered and dismissed with a series of negatives. In a passage of 136 words (B 33.148–58), “nan” (“none”) occurs ten times, forms of “ne” (“not”) eleven (including contractions such as “nis”), “nauht” (“nothing”) and “na” (“never”) once each, and “ac” (“but”) three times. Nothing is mightier than God nor like him, nor did any need compel God to create, but he did so through his own will and power. His nature is wonderful, for he and his good are unified, whereas our good comes from outside us, from God. Nothing is greater or before God, and nothing exists except what he wrought.

Meter 20 in C conveys this initial section differently. It lacks the density of negatives that the prose translation has but relies on a similar series of oppositions: creator versus created, unmoved mover versus mutable being, indivisible good versus creature reliant on external goods. Expressions of wonder and praise appear in both B and C, but C calls further attention to them by making them the alliterating words in some lines:

[E]ala, min drihten, þæt þu eart ælmihtig,
micel, modilic, mærpum gefræge
and wundorlic witen a gehwylcum.⁸⁴

Most of the alliteration in these three lines falls on words that emphasize the greatness of God: *ælmihtig* (“almighty”), *micel* (“great”), *modilic* (“high-minded”), *mærpum* (“in glories”), and *wundorlic* (“wonderful”).

After the initial section of praise and opposition, both texts move to the hierarchy of creation. This ordering runs heaviest to lightest: earth, water, air, fire. Water presents difficulties by occupying two different spaces. On the one hand, it sits on the earth but below the air or atmosphere.⁸⁵ Yet Alfred also

82 The Latin Meter has attracted much modern commentary as well as medieval; see, for instance, O'Daly, *The Poetry of Boethius*, 163–165, and O'Daly's notes.

83 For an important treatment of the C Meter, see Szarmach's “Meter 20: Context Bereft.” *ANQ* 15.2 (2002): 28–34.

84 CM 20.1–3: “Oh, my Lord, you are almighty, great, noble-minded, renowned in glory, and wonderful to all wise people.”

85 See B 33.178–82; compare CM 20.90–98. As Godden and Irvine note, *Boethius*, vol. 2, 381, this is Bede's hierarchy from *De natura rerum*.

writes that water belongs “on eorþan and eac on lyfte and eft bufan þam rodore.”⁸⁶ The appearance of two apparently contradictory locations for water shows the translator’s commitment to precision and accuracy here: nothing is simplified or left out in this section, and indeed he elaborates far beyond the Latin. Though elsewhere the *Boethius* makes many omissions, this cosmology forms the heart of the work and does not suffer abridgement or deletion. The passage names the elements and then details their qualities (hot or cold, wet or dry) and the places that God has ordained for them.⁸⁷ If the elements left their places, ruin would result: water and earth would be too cold for life without fire, but fire would burn everything without water and earth to temper it. All creation consists in the four elements. Though we cannot see them, they all reside in everything, even a stone.⁸⁸

Unusually, the C Meter makes a substantive addition at this point in the text, introducing the image of the cosmos as egg:

þæm anlicost þe on æge bið
 giolēca on middan, glided hwæðre
 æg ymbutan. Swa stent eall weoruld
 stille on tille, streamas ymbutan,
 lagufloda gelac, lyfte and tungla,
 and sio scire scell scriðeð ymbutan
 dogora gehwilce, dyde lange swa.⁸⁹

The versifier emphasizes the earth’s privileged position: like God, it stands still while everything else moves. God occupies the spiritual center of the universe; the earth, the physical center. Unlike God, however, the earth was created: God established its place and keeps it there. The C Meters thus display even more concern for the physical construction of the universe than the B prose text here.

86 B 33.191–92: “on earth and also on air and again above the firmament”; compare CM 20.122–24. Godden and Irvine note of this sentence that Bede’s *De natura rerum* also speaks of waters around the earth, *Boethius*, vol. 2, 382.

87 B 33.166–214 and CM 20.59–175.

88 This pervasiveness also helps explain the location of water in more than one place.

89 CM 20.169–75: “most like to that is the yolk in the middle of an egg, though the egg turns about it. So stands all this world still in place, the waters around it, the motion of the streams, the atmosphere, and the stars, and the shining shell turns around every day, and has done so for a long time.” On this passage, see Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 2, 511–512; for older traditions of the cosmic egg, see Dronke, *Verse and Prose*, 38.

The *Boethius* then treats the three-fold soul, but Alfred either rejects or fails to understand the Platonic notion of the world-soul.⁹⁰ Instead, he treats human souls, explaining the triplex nature unspecified in the Latin text as the three faculties identified by Alcuin (following Augustine): the concupiscible, the irascible, and the rational.⁹¹ As the heavens rotate, so too the soul turns like a wheel (“hweol,” B 33.227/CM 20.217). The image of the turning wheel has been previously invoked in the *Boethius* to illustrate the impermanence of worldly goods (B 7.61–62/CP 5.60–61) and the natural movement of all creation towards God (B 25.31–34/CM 13.73–80). The wheel appears again at B 39.155–93/CP 29.77–115 to illustrate how motion decreases as one moves closer to the axis, or God. The renderings of III.m.9 (“O qui perpetua”) occur just past the halfway points of the Old English texts, making them the axis upon which the *Boethius* turns.⁹²

Throughout the translation of the Latin Meter, the *Boethius* celebrates God’s work of creating, establishing, mingling, and binding through repetitions of words such as *gesceaft* (“creation” or “creature”), *gesceppan* (“to create”), and (*ge*)*wyrcan* (to make); *gesettan* (“to establish”) and *wealdan* (“to rule”); *gemen-gan* (“to mingle”); and *gebindan* (“to bind”).⁹³ All these ideas derive from the Latin, but where the concise Latin meter avoids duplication, both Old English versions delight in repetition and variation on these themes. The passage concludes with a prayer, though the proportions have changed. The Latin prayer takes the last quarter of the Meter; the Old English prayer takes only the last tenth of the prose and the verse renderings. The *Boethius* literally centers on a cosmology that maps out physical and spiritual relationships and hierarchies in detail.

The translations of III.m.9 elaborate the ideas in greatest depth, but later portions of the texts add one more element to the hierarchy. The Latin text mentions angels and demons once in passing, but the Old English texts insist on their place in creation: like human beings and unlike animals, they have

90 Godden and Irvine note heavy glossing in Latin manuscripts here, *Boethius* vol. 2, 384. Paul Szarmach argues that Alfred may be “quietly seeking to avoid the doctrinal difficulties” of the world-soul, possibly using glosses: see “Alfred, Alcuin, and the Soul,” at 131.

91 See Godden and Irvine’s *Boethius*, vol. 2, 385, for Alcuin as the translator’s source here; but see also Szarmach, “Alfred, Alcuin, and the Soul,” 133–139, for the possible role of the commentary tradition.

92 In Godden and Irvine’s edition, the midpoint of B comes around page 313; the rendering of III.m.9 begins at 315. C’s midpoint is 462, and Meter 20 starts on 463. (In Bieler’s edition, the midpoint is 53; III.m.9 begins on 51.) For the Latin Meter, see O’Daly, *The Poetry of Boethius*, 163, see Szarmach’s “Meter 20” and “The *Timaetus* in Old English.”

93 These words all appear in both the B prose and the C Meter.

free will and reason, so they can obey God or turn against him. In III.m.2, Philosophy sings about how creations return to their true natures: lions in captivity attack; caged birds will seek the freedom of the woods.⁹⁴ Wisdom states outright, “ælc gesceaft bið heald [onloten] wið hire gecynde...buton monnum and sumum englum þa weorðað hwilum of hiora gecynde.”⁹⁵ He then specifies that only men and “þa wiðerwierdan englas” defy their creator’s will.⁹⁶

The only time the *Consolation* mentions angels and demons, it names them among God’s instruments for enacting his providence: “Siue igitur famulanti-bus quibusdam prouidentiae diuinis spiritibus fatum exercetur seu anima seu tota inseruiente natura seu caelestibus siderum motibus seu angelica uirtute seu daemonum uaria sollertia seu aliquibus horum seu omnibus fatalis series textitur...”⁹⁷ The Old English revises the list: “Ða wyrð he þonne wyrçð oððe þurh þa godan englas oððe þurh monna sawla oððe þurh oðerra gesceafta lif oððe þurh heofenes tungl oððe þurh þara scuccena mislice lotwrencas, hwilum þurh an þara, [hwilum] þurh eall þa.”⁹⁸ Godden and Irvine note that the translator takes the Latin *spiritibus* as angels, as do some of the Latin glosses, though the *Consolation* sets them apart from the *angelica uirtute*.⁹⁹ Alfred also takes *anima* (“the world-soul”) as *monna sawla* (“the souls of men”), though none of the glosses give that interpretation.¹⁰⁰ The *Boethius* groups men and good angels together, as it has done before, and distances the angels from the demons. It suggests that the angels are more active participants than they are

94 For the Latin Meter, see O’Daly, *The Poetry of Boethius*, 157–161.

95 B 25.6–8: “every creation is held inclined towards its nature...except men and some angels who sometimes incline against their nature”; this passage corresponds to C Meter 13.14–17, where the sentence is worded differently but the key phrase, “sumum englum / and moncynne” (“some angels and mankind,” CM 13.15–16), is substantially the same.

96 B 35.105/CP 22.75: “the contrary angels.”

97 IV.pr.6.13: “Therefore whether fate is fulfilled by certain servants of providence, divine spirits, or a predetermined sequence is woven by the world-soul, or ever-serving nature, or the motions of the heavenly stars, or angelic power, or the varied shrewdness of demons, or by some of these, or by all...”

98 B 39.144–47/CP 29.66–69: “Then [God] works his providence, either through the good angels, or through men’s souls, or through the life of other creations, or through the stars of heaven, or through the various tricks of demons, sometimes through one of those, sometimes through all.”

99 Some glosses “explain the spirits as those which preside over the planets,” Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 2, 465.

100 Godden and Irvine note one possible exception, a single gloss that reads “in mente” (“in mind”), *Boethius*, vol. 2, 465—but even if the translator read such a gloss, it differs from his OE rendering.

in the Latin list, where “power” and “tricks” are the actual agents of providence and “angelica” merely describes the kind of power. In the English, the *englas* (“angels”) themselves feature as the headword in the list, along with souls (of men), life (of other creatures), and tricks (of demons); only *tungl* (“stars”) are also directly named as instruments of God instead of mere modifiers. Angels are not important in the *Consolation*. They receive far more attention in the *Boethius*.

After this passage, the *Boethius* returns to the topic of angels in every remaining chapter of B and the corresponding C passages. Where the *Consolation* demonstrates the free will and rationality of human beings, the *Boethius* insists that both faculties belong to angels as well.¹⁰¹ The next chapter asserts that angels have free will, rationality, or both three times.¹⁰² The *Consolation* attributes only sense to creatures unable to move themselves, imagination to creatures who can move themselves, reason to humanity, and pure intelligence to the divine.¹⁰³ The *Boethius* renders the Latin text, with some elaboration, then it diverges: “Englas þonne habbað gewiss andgit. Forþam sint ðas sceafta þus gesceapene þæt ða unstyriendan hi ne ahebben ofer þa styriendan ne him wið ne winnan, ne þa styriendan ofer þa men, ne þa men ofer þa englas, ne þa englas wið God.”¹⁰⁴ Alfred has precedent for taking “*intelgentia...diuini*” as angels: two manuscripts gloss the phrase “*angelici spiritus*” (“angelic spirits”).¹⁰⁵ No precedent exists, however, for using epistemology to create a ranking of creatures who do not contend against those above them; indeed, the *Boethius* earlier touched on animals killing humans and angels and men revolting against God, so it contradicts itself here (where the Latin source does not).¹⁰⁶

The *Boethius* then goes even further, claiming that “*gewis andget*” (“perfect understanding”) belongs both to “*englas...and wise men*” (“angels...and wise men,” B 41.145–46/CP 32.137–38). Here again the translator may draw on a gloss; where two manuscripts take the “*diuini*” (“divine”) to whom intelligence belongs as “*angelici spiritus*” (“angelic spirits”), a different gloss to “*diuini*”

101 B 40.111–13/CP 31.40–42.

102 B 41.26/CP 32.17, B 41.74–75/CP 32.64–65, and B 41.76–77/CP 32.66–67.

103 Vpr.5.4.

104 B 41.140–43/CP 32.132–35: “Angels then have perfect understanding. For all creatures have been created thus so that the unmoving do not elevate themselves over the moving, nor strive against them, nor the moving over the human beings, nor the human beings over the angels, nor the angels against God.” For “*gewis andget*” as “perfect understanding,” see Godden and Irvine, vol. 2, 94.

105 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 2, 493.

106 See Godden and Irvine, Commentary, *Boethius*, vol. 2, 493.

reads “quia illi sunt diuini generis qui deo digni adherent.”¹⁰⁷ The Old English text then seems to retreat from the radical position that wise men may possess pure intelligence, for the subsequent concessive clause “gif we nu hæfdon ænigne dæl untwiogendes andgites swa swa englas habbað” implies that we do not, as do the following lines, which contrast human doubt with angelic certainty.¹⁰⁸ The connection between angels and men is not abandoned, however: angels and men’s souls are the two kinds of beings that have a beginning but no end.¹⁰⁹ The *Boethius* promotes a cosmology that includes a surprising suggestion that human capacity may approach the divine.

Philosophy’s goal throughout the *Consolation* is to redirect the narrator’s mind from the lower to the higher. She is not concerned about lower creations except to make him understand that they *are* lower. While the *Boethius* also redirects the mind to the divine, the Old English texts demonstrate clear and sustained interest in ranking things. From partial goods to the one good, from the heavier elements to the lighter, from the purely sensual to pure intelligence, the *Boethius* maps out the cosmos, seen and unseen, in an orderly fashion. The text focuses on the higher and the eternal but never loses sight of the lower and the ephemeral. The *Boethius* keeps a broad perspective that encompasses life in this world even as it looks to the next.

Conclusions: The Afterlife of the *Boethius*

Perhaps the combined interest in life in this world and the next helped keep the *Boethius* alive. Though it is a difficult philosophical text, the *Boethius* survives in two copies made as much as two hundred years apart, and an additional fragment was lost little more than a century ago.¹¹⁰ It influenced several works by authors into the thirteenth century. Clearly, later readers valued it.

The *Boethius* was used by Old English homilists, most notably Ælfric. Godden and Irvine have recently traced key borrowings from the *Boethius* for Ælfric’s *Lives of the Saints* and *De auguriis* in their edition.¹¹¹ Ælfric also very

107 “because those are of divine nature who are worthy to cleave to God,” Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 2, 493.

108 B 41.148–49/CP 32.139–40: “if we now had any part of the certain understanding which the angels have”; the contrast follows in B 41.150–55/CP 32.141–46. (C is damaged here and supplied from B).

109 B 42.16–18/CP 33.17–19.

110 For the manuscripts and fragment, see above, 201–202.

111 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, Introduction, vol. 1, 207–209; and “Ælfric Passages,” vol. 1, 545–547. See also Szarmach, “Boethius’s Influence in Anglo-Saxon England: The Vernacular and the

likely used the *Boethius* as a source for his *De creatore et creatura*.¹¹² Ælfric's idea of God's eternity seems to derive from the end of the *Boethius*. Three passages in *De creatore* borrow from the last chapter of the *Boethius*. Two are less dramatic: *De creatore* 20–25 and 29–32, both drawing on B 42.13–19. The final passage is closest:

Ne ondræt he nenne forþan ðe nan oðer nis mihtigre
þonne he, ne furþan him gelic.
Efre he bið gifende his gifa þam ðe he wile,
ac [he h]is þin[g] ne waniað, ne he nanes ne behofað.
Efre he bið ælmihtig and efre he wyle wel. (*De creatore* 41–45)¹¹³

Ne ondræt he nanwuht forþam he næfð nænne ricran, ne furþum nænne
gelican. Simle he bið gifende and ne wanað hys næfre nauht. Simle he bið
ælmihtig forþam he simle wile god and næfre nan yfel. (*Boethius* B 42.32–
34/CP 33.33–36)¹¹⁴

The *Boethius* is a direct source for words and ideas in these passages, although, as Godden and Irvine note, Ælfric never names it explicitly.¹¹⁵ Godden suggests that Ælfric did not know the attribution of the *Boethius* to Alfred, and that he avoided naming it because it takes heterodox positions.¹¹⁶

De consolatione philosophiae,” in *A Companion to Boethius in the Middle Ages*, ed. Noel Harold Kaylor, Jr. and Philip Edward Phillips, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 30 (Boston: 2012), 221–254, esp. 236–243; and Godden, “Ælfric and the Alfredian Precedents,” *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 18 (Leiden: 2009), 139–163, particularly 147–160.

112 Here I have used the edition used by the *DOE*: William Procter Stoneman, “A Critical Edition of Ælfric's Translation of Alcuin's *Interrogationes Sigwulfi Presbiteri* and of the Related Texts *De creatore et creatura* and *De sex etatibus huius seculi*,” Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Toronto, 1982. Thanks to Aaron Kleist for supplying this text. He and I independently identified the same passages in the *Boethius* as direct sources for Ælfric's *De creatore*.

113 “He fears nothing because none is mightier than he, nor even like him. He always gives his gifts to those he wills, and he never lacks his things, nor does he need anything. Always he is almighty, and always he wills well.”

114 “He dreads nothing because he has none more powerful, nor even any like. Always he gives, and he never lacks anything. Always he is almighty, because always he wills good and never any evil.”

115 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, Introduction, vol. 1, 207.

116 Godden, “Ælfric and the Alfredian Precedents,” esp. 147–163.

Ælfric's *Interrogationes Sigewulfi* also includes this exchange: "Hu fela / gesceadwise gesceafta gesceop God? Twa, Englas & menn."¹¹⁷ Alcuin's *In Genesim* is a likely source: "Inter. 2. Quot creaturas rationales condidit Deus?—Resp. Duas. Angelos et homines: et coelum angelis, et terram hominibus habitationem."¹¹⁸ Yet Ælfric's wording echoes the *Boethius*: "he gesceop twa gescedwisan gesceafta frio, englas and men."¹¹⁹ Anglo-Saxon glossators are nearly as likely to use (*ge*)*settan* or (*ge*)*wyrcean* to translate *condo* as they are to use (*ge*)*sceapan*, and Ælfric uses all three of those verbs in contexts of creation, suggesting influence from the *Boethius* as well as from Alcuin directly.¹²⁰

Godden and Irvine have also shown borrowings from the *Boethius* by the Old English *Distichs of Cato*.¹²¹ Moreover, Nicholas Trevet used the *Boethius* when he wrote a Latin commentary on the *Consolation* around 1300.¹²² Manuscript B was annotated in the fourteenth or fifteenth century; the *Boethius* still found an audience through the Middle English period.¹²³ Despite its evident

117 2.24–25: "How many rational creatures did God create? Two, angels and men," George Edwin Mac Lean (ed.), "Ælfric's Version of *Alcuini Interrogationes Sigewulfi in Genesin*," *Anglia* 7 (1884): 1–59.

118 "Question 2: How many rational creatures did God establish? Answer: Two. Angels and men: and heaven as a habitation for angels, and earth for men," *PL* 100, 516–566, at 517C (the manuscript reads "rationabiles" for "rationales"); my translation. See M.B. Bedingfield, "The Sources of Ælfric's *Interrogationes Sigewulfi in Genesin* (Cameron C.B.1.6.1)," *Fontes*.

119 B 41.25–26/CP 32.16–17: "He created two free, rational creatures: angels and men." The *Boethius* here draws on the same passage from Alcuin that Ælfric uses. Godden and Irvine do not cite Alcuin for this line in the *Boethius*; their Commentary for the passage in Chapter 41 (*Boethius*, vol. 2, 488) refers back to their note on 40.111–113 (vol. 2, 485–486) where they quote a commentary on the Latin *De consolatione*: "sciendum itaque quod soli angeli et homines rationalis a deo creati sunt, quibus etiam liberum arbitrium etsi concessum siue ad bonum siue ad malum," ("and thus it is known that only angels and men were created rational by God, and to them free will was also granted, whether for good or for evil," my translation). Alcuin picks up the matter of free will a little later in his text (*PL* 100, 523B), arguing that it is not fitting for a supreme being to be served by unfree men. The glosses may derive from Alcuin, and either or both may inform Alfred's translation.

120 See the *OEC*.

121 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 209–212. For other OE texts that may draw on the *De consolatione* or the *Boethius*, see Szarmach, "Boethius's Influence," 243–253.

122 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 212–214; they follow closely Brian S. Donaghey, "Nicholas Trevet's Use of King Alfred's Translation of Boethius, and the Dating of His Commentary," *The Medieval Boethius: Studies in the Vernacular Translations of De Consolatione Philosophiae*, ed. A.J. Minnis (Cambridge: 1987), 1–31.

123 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 213, note 1.

difficulty in language and in philosophy, readers considered the Old English text worthwhile for centuries after it was written.

Scholars in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries rediscovered its value. The *Boethius* enjoyed only one transcript and one edition before 1829, but the nineteenth century saw three full editions, plus three of the *Meters* only.¹²⁴ Four more editions of the *Meters* were published in the twentieth century.¹²⁵ Beginning in the 1960s, scholarship on the *Boethius* grew tremendously.¹²⁶ The twenty-first century so far has seen great interest in the text, not least in the important new edition by Godden and Irvine.¹²⁷ The *Boethius* now invites scholars to consider its two texts in multiple contexts: in light of each other, in view of both Latin and vernacular genres and traditions, and in terms of manuscript history. Creative and speculative thought shine through this free translation, provoking us to reconsider its place in literary and intellectual history. While it shares many themes with its main Latin source text, it takes a broader view of human life, ultimately ranking of priorities and beings in both earthly and divine spheres. The *Boethius* proved a vital text not only for the later Old English period but also into the Middle English era. It excites inquiry and wonder in readers more than a millennium after its writing, and it will continue to do so for quite some time.

124 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 215–222.

125 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 223–224.

126 Greg Waite, *Old English Prose Translations of King Alfred's Reign*, Annotated Bibliographies of Old and Middle English Literature 6 (Rochester, NY: 2000), cites 37 studies of the *Boethius* from 1860 through 1960, then 67 items from 1961–96 (Waite's end date). Another eleven studies on the *Boethius* appear in the *OEN* Database for 1997–2000.

127 At least 46 items on the *Boethius* appeared in *OEN* bibliographies for 2001–9 (and more since 2009).

Augustine's *Soliloquia* in Old English¹

Paul E. Szarmach

Until recently, Augustine's *Soliloquia* and its vernacular twin in Old English have received little significant attention from the world of scholarship. For Augustinians there is much else to celebrate in the major works of the Bishop of Hippo, which would be easy to number as the *Confessions*, the *City of God*, *On the Trinity* and even perhaps *On Christian Doctrine*. These works have paid and repaid interest, while the early Augustine, notably in the Cassiciacum dialogues, has received the circumscribed study traditionally reserved for works seen as proleptic to a career or otherwise preliminary or introductory.² The *Soliloquia*, which is the last of these early dialogues, has now become the subject of a major study, Brian Stock's *Augustine's Inner Dialogue*, which gives new interpretations of the early dialogues and the significance of the philosophical soliloquy.³ One may note here as well Gerard Watson's edition with its helpful introduction, commentary, and translation.⁴ Yet Augustine did not admire his own work, stressing in the *Retractions* (a.k.a. *Revisions*) 1.4 and 1.5 that *Soliloquia* had remained "imperfectum," presumably meaning "incomplete" or

1 I would like to thank Susan Irvine, Nicole Guenther Discenza, and Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe for their suggestions improving this chapter. Any errors that remain are mine.

2 These works include *The Happy Life*, *Answer to Skeptics* (*Contra Academicos*), *Divine Providence* and the *Problem of Evil* (*De Ordine*), and *Soliloquies* (*Soliloquiorum libri duo*). Henceforth I shall follow the convention established by Milton McC. Gatch in using *Soliloquia* to refer to Augustine's work and *Soliloquies* to refer to the Old English work: "King Alfred's Version of Augustine's *Soliloquia*: Some Suggestions on its Rationale and Unity," in *Studies in Earlier Old English Prose*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany, NY: 1986), 17–45, at 25. For background information on the *Soliloquia* see *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald, et al. (Grand Rapids and Cambridge: 1999).

3 Brian Stock, *Augustine's Inner Dialogue* (Cambridge: 2010). See especially Chapter 2, "Soliloquy and Self-existence," 62–120. Cf. now Ronald J. Ganze, "The Individual in the Afterlife: Theological and Sociopolitical Concerns in King Alfred's Translation of Augustine's *Soliloquies*," *Studia Neophilologica* 83 (2011): 21–40.

4 Gerard Watson (ed. and trans.), *Saint Augustine: Soliloquies and Immortality of the Soul* (Warminster: 1990). Watson gives Hörmann's Latin text: Augustine, *Soliloquiorum libri duos*, ed. Wolfgang Hörmann, *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Opera*, CSEL 89 (Vienna: 1986). Serviceable translations are: *Saint Augustine: Soliloquies*, trans. and notes Kim Paffenroth, with intro. Boniface Ramsey (Hyde Park, NY: 2000); and "Soliloquies," trans. with introduction, Thomas F. Gilligan in *Writings of Saint Augustine*, The Fathers of the Church 1 (New York: 1948), 333–426.

“unfinished.”⁵ For Anglo-Saxonists the situation is more fundamental: how can one explain the survival of a vernacular “translation” into Old English, traditionally ascribed to Alfred the Great (c. 849–899), which is one of the earliest witnesses to the Latin and indeed the earliest vernacular rendering? Anglo-Saxonists have been wary of this Old English work.⁶ This chapter will describe the issues and themes embedded in the question above and offer suggestions and approaches that can provide a fruitful response. The major topics include manuscript evidence and its problematical features; the structure of the Old English text; the devotional temper of the *Soliloquies*; the “Alfredian” flair for metaphor; the personal dimension of the *Soliloquies*; other sources, especially in Book III; the relation to the Old English *Boethius*; and finally the *Soliloquies* as the first witness to vernacular philosophy. Comparative source study will be the major approach informed by close reading. *Soliloquies* is the target text, but *Soliloquia* will help provide the context. There are, however, important preliminaries that must open the discussion.

Manuscript Evidence and Editions⁷

There are two manuscripts containing *Soliloquies*:

5 See *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Retractationum Libri II*, ed. Almut Mutzenbecher CCL 57 (Turnhout: 1984), 13–15 for I.4 *Soliloquiorum libri duo*, and 15–17 for I.5, *De immortalitate animae liber unus*. For a translation see *Saint Augustine: The Retractations*, trans. Mary Inez Bogan, The Fathers of the Church 60 (Washington, DC: 1968). It is clear that Augustine saw *De immortalitate* as the completion of *Soliloquia*, if an unsuccessful one. In *Retractions* I.5 he writes that the unfinished *De immortalitate* somehow got into circulation against his will, continuing to say: “qui primo ratiocinationum contortione atque breuitate sic obscurus est, ut fatiget cum legitur etiam intentionem meam, uix que intellegatur a me ipso” (“The book is so obscure, through both the tortuousness of reasoning and its brevity, that the reading strains even my own concentration, and the contents are hardly understood even by myself”).

6 Stanley B. Greenfield and Fred C. Robinson list five editions, one translation, and eleven studies (mainly on text and language) of the OE translation through 1972 in their classic *Bibliography of Publications on Old English Literature to the End of 1972* (Toronto and Buffalo: 1980), 313–314 (items 5456–71, but Cockayne’s collection does not receive its own number).

In the *OEN Bibliography Database* there are seventeen items between 1973 and 2006, some of which cover more than one Alfredian translation, and one of which is an edition and translation into Italian. The bibliographies for 2007 and 2009 have one item each, while the 2008 bibliography has none.

7 This treatment of manuscript evidence and related issues derives from my article “Alfred’s *Soliloquies* in London, BL, Cotton Tiberius A.iii (art. 99 fols. 50v–51v)” in *Latin Learning and*

London, BL, Cotton Tiberius A.iii. fols. 50v–51v, XI^{med}, Canterbury, Christ Church [Ker 186 art. 9g; Gneuss 369]

London, BL, Cotton Vitellius A.xv, fols., 4r–59v, XI^{med} [Ker 215, art. 1, Gneuss 399]

Tiberius is an extract in two parts, which correspond to ed. Carnicelli, 50.10–17 [=ed. Endter, 4.1–5.1] and ed. Carnicelli, 54.21 to 56.9 [=ed. Endter, 11.15–14.7]. In the manuscript, this extract is one of a set of “confessional prayers and forms and directions for the use of a confessor,” or so Ker describes it.⁸ Although Henri Logeman was the first to print this text (1889), he was unaware of its connection to *Soliloquies*.⁹ Karl Jost made the identification in 1950, duly noted by Ker, which means an important piece of textual evidence did not assist the early, pioneering editions of Henry Lee Hargrove (1902) and Wilhelm Endter (1922).¹⁰ Inexplicably Carnicelli missed Tiberius, for which he received criticism in the reviews of his work.¹¹ There is now an electronic edition of *Soliloquies* as part of Kevin Kiernan's edition of *Beowulf* which serves as a facsimile.¹² As the earliest vernacular witness, Tiberius casts an important light on the *Soliloquies*, reflecting a different copying tradition from Vitellius. A comparison between Tiberius and Vitellius discloses many points of

English Lore: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge, ed. Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe and Andy Orchard, 2 vols. (Toronto, Buffalo: 2005), vol. 2, 154–179. That article offers more details on various aspects of this extract and its importance.

8 Ker, *Catalogue*, 243–244.

9 Henri Logeman, “Anglo-Saxonica Minora,” *Anglia* 12 (1889): 497–518, at 511–533.

10 Karl Jost, *Wulfstanstudien*, Schweizer Anglistische Arbeiten 23 (Berne: 1960), 208; Henry Lee Hargrove (ed.), *King Alfred's Old English Version of St. Augustine's Soliloquies*, Yale Studies in English 13 (New York: 1902). Hargrove's *King Alfred's Old English Version of St. Augustine's Soliloquies Turned into Modern English*, Yale Studies in English 22 (New York: 1904) is also available in *Translations from the Old English* (Hamden, CT: 1970). Hargrove prints “Alfredian additions” to the Latin in italics. Wilhelm Endter (ed.), *König Alfred des Grossen Bearbeitung der Soliloquien des Augustines*, Bibliothek der Angelsächsischen Prosa 11 (Hamburg: 1922; repr. Darmstadt: 1964), offers the Maurist edition of the Latin from PL 32. Dorothy Whitelock offers extracts in *EHD* vol. 1, no. 2371, 917–919.

11 Thomas A. Carnicelli (ed.), *King Alfred's Version of St. Augustine's Soliloquies* (Cambridge, MA, 1969). Greenfield and Robinson's *Bibliography*, no. 5459, 314, lists the various reviews. It is not accurate to consider this edition as “standard,” but it is a practical solution in the absence of a standard edition. The translations to Modern English follow the Carnicelli edition. Unless otherwise indicated, the translations of Latin and Old English are mine.

12 Kevin S. Kiernan (ed.), with Ionut Emil Jacob, programmer, *Electronic Beowulf 3.0* (London and Chicago: 2011).

difference, particularly eyeskips, that compromise the text in either version.¹³ In his review of Carnicelli, Stanley notes more than a score of textual difficulties between the two versions and observes that his list of variants is not complete.¹⁴ Not all variance comes from mere error, of course, and close analysis of the many individual variants, which is beyond the scope of the treatment here, might confirm a pattern or likelihood that indicates a tendency towards a free rendering of the Latin. There are suggestions of a scribal attempt to overcome rough passages and perhaps to engage in some improvisation. Malcolm Godden suggests that Book III of the *Soliloquies* needs a rearrangement.¹⁵ The variants imply that there is an undocumented vernacular tradition, doubtlessly with warts and all, beyond Tiberius and Vitellius.

While the collation of texts can point to a tradition of copying *Soliloquies*, Tiberius suggests another aspect of the adaptation of the *Soliloquies*, which it shares with the Latin tradition. There is, as Heinrich Stirnimann shows, a text that can be called "Augustine's Prayer," which is equivalent to *Soliloquia* 1.2–6 (Tiberius contains only 1.2 and 1.5–6).¹⁶ Stirnimann in fact considers *Soliloquia* 1.2–6 as a separate text, laying it out as some 284 "free verse" lines.¹⁷ The "Prayer" is found in an extract state among the works of Alcuin twice: PL 101, 580–582, and also PL 101, 1383–1416 (at 1398). In effect, Stirnimann is doing what the Anglo-Saxons and others did by separating out the prayer from the whole work. It may be a venerable old tactic to render an extract from a whole work, but here Tiberius hints why the whole of *Soliloquies* may have survived. The devotional temper evident in *Soliloquia* and particularly in the embedded prayer was the attraction for the survival of both whole and part.

The Latin tradition of "Augustine's prayer" reflects the vernacular. There are four pre-twelfth-century manuscripts of the *Soliloquia*: London, BL Add. 43460 (viii), BL Add. 16896 (xi), BL Add. 24902, and Salisbury Cathedral Library 173 (xi).¹⁸ The eighth-century Add. 43460 did not get to England until the nineteenth century, ultimately from its North Italian home, where it was

13 Szarmach, "Alfred's *Soliloquies*," 154–158.

14 E.G. Stanley, rev. of Carnicelli in *Notes and Queries* 215 (1970): 109–112, at 110.

15 Malcolm Godden, "Text and Eschatology in Book III of the Old English *Soliloquies*," *Anglia* 121 (2003): 79–188.

16 Heinrich Stirnimann, *Grund unde Gründer des Alls*, *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 12 (Freiburg: 1992). Stirnimann offers an extensive commentary on the prayer, *Grund unde Gründer*, 66–123. See below.

17 Stirnimann, *Grund unde Gründer*, 42–61.

18 Franz Römer, *Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung der Werke des heiligen Augustinus*, bd. II/1, *Großbritannien und Irland: Werkverzeichnis*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte 281 (Vienna: 1972), 17–21.

presumably produced at San Silvestre, Nonantola.¹⁹ It remains the earliest manuscript in the tradition. BL Add. 16896 and BL Add. 9402 are comparatively unstudied.²⁰ Salisbury 173 is a tenth-century continental import evidently brought to England by the mid-eleventh century as the Cathedral Library grew into an Anglo-Norman center of learning and scholarship.²¹ Salisbury, within the chronological range of Tiberius, has some Old English scribbles, but no one has yet tried to make a link between the two. Hörmann cites three extracts in the apparatus of his edition: BL Royal 2.A.xx (viii); Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale 113 (ix^{med}); and Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale 469 (xi). The Royal extract offers different readings and passages from Tiberius.²² It is not necessary that there be only one tradition behind the extracts, one must note. *Officia per ferias*, a collection of prayers and hymns containing "Augustine's Prayer" and attributed to Alcuin in Migne (PL 101, 580–582), is falsely attributed, according to Donald A. Bullough who sees it as unquestionably a ninth-century production.²³ Nevertheless, "Augustine's Prayer" occupies three columns in Migne. *Libellus sacrum precum* (PL 101, 1383–1416 at 1383), likewise found among the works of Alcuin, gives "Augustine's Prayer" with abbreviation and some variation.²⁴ The Latin and vernacular textual traditions overcome Augustine's misgivings about his work and transmit his "imperfect" treatise in two forms: the whole and an extract (in various shapes) that carries forth the meditative or devotional theme found in the whole. With this evidentiary base in the textual tradition, one can move forward to consider the major

- 19 For BL add. 43460 see *Catalogue of Additions in the Manuscripts in the British Museum 1931–1935* (London: 1967). The manuscript was formerly Phillippus 12261 and Beaty Western MS 3. The online version of the catalogue is available at <http://molcat.bl.uk/msscscat>.
- 20 For add. 16896 see *Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum 1846–1847* (London: 1864), 31617. The online version of the of the catalogue is available at <http://molcat.bl.uk.msscscat>. For Add. 24902 see Römer, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferungen*, II/1, 70–71.
- 21 Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 381, 451. For Salisbury generally see Teresa Webber, *Scribes and Scholars at Salisbury Cathedral c. 1075–c. 1125* (Oxford: 1992), and esp. 77, 79.
- 22 Szarmach, "Alfred's *Soliloquies*," 159.
- 23 Donald A. Bullough, *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation*, Education and Society in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance 16 (Leiden and Boston: 2004), 158–160, for the Alcuinian tradition behind prayer books and for the Insular devotional tradition.
- 24 In his important study *The Anglo-Saxon Library* (Oxford: 2006), Michael Lapidge traces other evidence for the *Soliloquia* in (generally later) Anglo-Saxon England. These include: 1) mention in an inventory from an unidentified center (Worcester?); 2) a citation in Aldhelm's *De metris* (ed. Ehwald, 81); 3) a citation of *Soliloquia* i.2.2–6 in Alcuin's *De laude Dei*; 4) Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale 5558–63 (2498) x¹. I have not been able to study the manuscripts concerned directly.

features of Augustine's work and how they play out in the Old English version.

Authorship

One of the major issues in this Brill Companion is the question of Alfredian authorship of the works traditionally associated with his name. A discussion of the full controversy is available in Bately above (Chapter 4), while other contributors participate as their arguments require. In the matter of the *Soliloquies* a further complication arises. Ever since Frank Hubbard first demonstrated a close relation of the *Boethius* and *Soliloquies*, a relation that Carnicelli elaborated upon, mainline scholarship has seen the two works as an authorial pair. The editors of the Oxford *Boethius* join with Hubbard and Carnicelli in describing a close relation, concluding "It is impossible to resist the conclusion that the two works are by the same author, as indeed most scholars have long believed."²⁵ If the imperatives of this skeptical age do not eventually overturn this consensus, then there is much that one needs to consider and to review about Old English intellectual prose and the presumptive author. *Boethius* and *Soliloquies* imply an author who is ready to engage abstract and difficult concepts and to do so without a vernacular tradition to support him. The *Consolation* exists within the context of a complicated commentary tradition that, while posing its own questions, at least also gives some answers.²⁶ *Soliloquia* does not offer such a safety net for the author who in effect has to create his own interpretive framework. The two vernacular works suggest an author who is capable of a measure of intellectual risk: Old English has no developed philosophical vocabulary to offer, and he must find his own way.²⁷

25 *The Old English Boethius*, ed. Malcom Godden and Susan Irvine with a chapter on the *Metres* by Mark Griffith and contributions by Rohini Jayatilaka, 2 vols. (Oxford: 2009), vol. 1, 135–136; Frank Hubbard, "The Relation of the 'Blooms of King Alfred' to the Anglo-Saxon Translation of Boethius," *MLN* 9 (1894): 161–171; *Soliloquies*, ed. Carnicelli, 29–37.

26 See Rosalind Love in this volume, Chapter 3. See my article "Boethius's Influence in Anglo-Saxon England: The Vernacular and the *De Consolatione Philosophiae*," in *A Companion to Boethius in the Middle Ages*, ed. Noel Harold Kaylor, Jr. and Phillip Phillips (Leiden and Boston: 2012), 221–254.

27 See Janet Bately, "Uðwita/Philosophus Revisited: A Reflection on OE Usage," in *Essays on Anglo-Saxon and Related Themes in Memory of Lynne Grundy*, ed. Jane Roberts and Janet Nelson, King's College London Medieval Studies 17 (London: 2000), 15–36. Bately suggests that Alfred uses the imprecise term *uðwita*, while the *Orosius*-translator the loanword *filosof*, each translator seeking his own way to render their respective texts accessible.

Further, if *Boethius* is not by Alfred, then *Soliloquies* is not either, yet whoever is the author was not totally uncomfortable with some measure of speculative thought. Whatever one may predicate about the *Boethius*-author one must predicate about the *Soliloquies*-author. Godden and Irvine furthermore discuss the problem of Boethian terminology and Old English rendering thereof, stressing the difficulties of terminology in the *Consolation* and the associated difficulty of rendering that terminology into Old English.²⁸ *Soliloquies* accordingly participates in this fundamental problem. With these factors for consideration, this essay turns toward an engagement with the texts. The exposition cites Carnicelli's text.

The First Introduction: Working with *Materia/Silva*

Endter, Hargrove, and Carnicelli all begin their editions with three paragraphs in the "Alfredian voice." The first paragraph begins *Soliloquies* imperfectly, for its opening words, "Gaderode me þonne" ("I then gathered"), suggest possibly some kind of a continuing sequence that leads to the present situation and to the action(s) about to be described.²⁹ There is no way to be certain how much has been lost, if anything. The speaker, whose voice is not directly associated with Alfred in the text here, but always assumed to be the royal voice because of the attribution at the end of Book III, proceeds to describe how he gathered wood and tools, which he brought home presumably to build his home. The description of what he has done at times suggests an epic simile in its grand sweep supported by particular details regarding the wood and tools, e.g. the contrast between in the alliterative pair "bohtimbru and bolttimbru," which the *Dictionary of Old English* suggests is a contrast between curved timber and straight timber.³⁰ In addition, there are four other words in the first sentence

28 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 1, 72–79.

29 Simeon Potter translates the opening with commentary in his "King Alfred's Last Preface," in *Philologica: The Malone Anniversary Studies*, ed. Thomas A. Kirby and Henry Bosley Woolf (Baltimore: 1949), 25–30, at 28–29. Potter feels that the adverb *þonne* is "too light" to refer to any significant prior text. Dorothy Whitelock offers her rendering of the opening and select passages in *EHD*, selection 237a, 918–920. K&L offer a select translation in *Alfred the Great*, 138–152, with notes at 299–301; they entertain the speculation that some text might be lost. The Old English passages discussed in the "first paragraph" are to be found in Carnicelli 47.1 through 48.17.

30 The technical vocabulary and the meanings proposed by the editor-translators are: *kicglas*: Hargrove, "staves"; Potter, "poles"; Carnicelli, "short, thick sticks"; Whitelock, "staves";

that occur in Old English only in the opening sentence of *Soliloquies*. As Susan Irvine observes, the speaker piles up technical vocabulary, where the diction is that of carpenters rather than royals.³¹ A standard scholarly reading of the opening suggests a speaker who is practical, knowledgeable about day-to-day matters, and domestic or homely in his diction. The *Soliloquia* is hardly mundane in its grand effect, but the *Soliloquies* makes a move in its chosen direction.

The woodsman imagery continues as the speaker describes how he carried the wood home, having seen in each of the most beautiful trees something he needed. At this point the image is still very much open in that the terms of the comparison are not evident, although it is clear that there is meaning undefined in the narrative of collecting wood. The reader/hearer might expect—or hope for—an allegory that explains all the technical vocabulary and the particular points for comparison. Instead, the speaker turns or applies the image to the audience in a direct instruction or moral command (“Forþam ic lyre...”) to each person who is able and who has the wagons to go to the same wood that he did and collect more from it in order to build many a splendid house (“manig ænlic hus”), enjoying it in winter and in summer. The speaker returns to himself with the striking observation that he has not himself yet experienced such comfort (“swa swa ic nu ne gyt ne dyde”). This wistful note would seem to undercut the entire passage with a measure of disappointment in his woodcraft. Yet the apparent chagrin has an almost immediate answer by another turn in the argument, this time to God, who taught him (“lærde,” echoing its earlier use) and to whom the wood was pleasing. The speaker knows that two houses come from God: the transitory dwelling place he lives in and the eternal home that God has promised through Augustine, Gregory, Jerome and many other fathers. In a prayerful tone the speaker concludes this first section of the introduction, expressing the hope that God will enlighten the eyes

supansceftas: Hargrove, “studshafts”; Potter, “posts”; Carnicelli, “posts, props”; Whitelock, “props”;

lohsceaftas: Hargrove, “crossbeams”; Potter, “thongs”; Carnicelli, “handles with a strap (?)”; Whitelock, “tie-shafts”;

hylfa: Hargrove, “helves”; Potter, “helves”; Carnicelli, Whitelock, “handles”;

bohtimbru: Hargrove, “bow-timbers”; Potter, “building materials”; Whitelock, “crossbars”;

bolttimbru: Hargrove: “staves”; Potter untranslated per se and folded in with “bohtimbru”; Carnicelli as Potter; Whitelock, “beams.”

K&L follow Whitelock. See Irvine, above, 165, for her translation of the first sentence. I have abbreviated the discussions of Potter and Carnicelli. One can discern the evident lexical struggles within the field of choices.

31 See Irvine, above, 165.

of his mind so that he may search out the right way to the eternal home, to eternal glory, and to eternal rest. The paragraph ends with the interjection "sie swa" ("may it be so"), which has the finality of "Amen."

The first paragraph contains the possibility of a deeper reading than the elaborate woodsman metaphor. Martin Irvine suggests that Alfred is gesturing towards a metaphor of writing as "compiling material from a 'forest' of prior texts."³² This suggestion takes the Alfredian Introduction out of the domain of homely metaphors, an expectation given other metaphorical usages in the *Soliloquies*.³³ For further support of the literary meaning of the forest metaphor, Martin Irvine cites Boniface, whose Preface to Sigibertus in the *Ars Grammatica* contains a more straightforward use of the forest-metaphor:

...ut antiquam perplexae siluam densitatis grammaticorum ingrederer ad colligendum tibi diversorum optima quaeque genera pomorum et uariorum odora menta florum diffusa, quae passim dispersa per saltum grammaticorum inueniuntur, ad cotidianum scilicet tui diligentis studii pastum et odoriferam coronam ingeniosae pubertatis et ut optima quaeque et necessaria quasi in unum cumulando farciens marsuppium coaceruata et circumcisa tibi obtulerim.³⁴

Boniface has full control of the metaphor and its various parts. The reader/hearer knows that s/he is among the rhetoricians and the grammarians as the clauses of the metaphor unfold. Comparatively, Alfred's forest metaphor is not so well-grounded. As it unfolds, the reader/listener can perceive that the metaphor concerns building, but building what is not so evident. Gatch offers a formulation close to the evidence: "the writing of a vernacular version of the *Soliloquia* is but one instance of the gathering of the material from the forest of

32 Martin Irvine, *The Making of a Textual Culture* (Cambridge: 1994), 435–437, here at 436. See also Robert Stanton, *The Culture of Translation in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: 2002), 85–91, with special reference to Asser.

33 See Susan Irvine, "Did the Anglo-Saxons Write Fiction? Old English Prose: King Alfred and His Books," *Beowulf & Other Stories: A New Introduction to Old English, Old Icelandic and Anglo-Norman Literatures*, ed. Richard North and Joe Allard (Harlow: 2007), 246–271, at 269.

34 "As I enter into the ancient forest of grammarians' intricate density to collect for you the best of each diverse fruits and the diffused fragrances of various flowers, which are found dispersed everywhere through the woodlands of the grammarians, for the daily nourishment of your diligent study and a fragrant garland of your youthful talent, so that I have presented to you the best and most necessary, piled together and shortened, packing them together by filling one pouch, as it were."

Christian knowledge for the building of one's heavenly habitation."³⁵ Yet again, the Old English does not specifically indicate a literary metaphor. One might alternatively suggest that the *silva*/forest metaphor is an adaptation of Neoplatonic cosmology in that the metaphor in the unformed matter is an allusion to Creation, *Silva/materia* is understood as coming from the Greek *hyle*. *Silva* is the unformed matter out of which the world comes to be.³⁶ The speaker is building for himself the house/cottage of salvation. In *Etymologies* III.1 Isidore of Seville explains in his fashion how the content of the word *hyle*, shifting to Latin, becomes *materia*, also meaning "wood" named in turn by the poets as *silva*.³⁷

The second paragraph of the Preface returns to the theme of timberwork and building for a moment, using it to introduce another image altogether: landholding and its use. The gathered wood has now become a home on earth and then a heavenly home, and then a form of double tenancy. The home on earth is a cottage ("cotlyf") built on his lord's lease ("on his hlaforðes læne") where the cottage-builder may rest, go hunting, go fowling, go fishing or use the cottage within the terms of the lease, on sea or on land until he earns the "bookland" of the eternal heritage through his lord's mercy.³⁸ The speaker prays that He Who created and ruled will grant that the cottage-builder—at this point becoming identified with the speaker (or the Alfredian voice)—will be fit here, and indeed to come there ("ge her nytwyrde to beonne, ge huru þider to cumane"). The emphasis on leisure pursuits is striking. The presence of the mention of these pursuits in a discussion of personal salvation would seem to be best explained as a continuation of the joint theme of the earthly home and the heavenly home begun at the end of the first paragraph. The speaker finds value in earthly pursuits and sees them in positive relation to the pursuit of heaven. These secular values support the standard picture of Alfred as a practical man-in-the-world.

35 Gatch, "King Alfred's Version," 25.

36 Although his book concerns the twelfth century and the figure of Bernard Silvestris, Brian Stock's study of *Myth and Science in the Twelfth Century* (Princeton: 1972) describes *silva*/forest, 97–118.

37 Isidore of Seville, *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, ed. W.M. Lindsay (Oxford: 1911), XIII.iii (*De elementis*) trans. Stephen A. Barney, W.J. Lewis, J.A. Beach, Oliver Berghof, with the collaboration of Muriel Hall, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* (Cambridge: 2006), XIII.1, 272.

38 See Ann Williams, "Land Tenure," in *WBEase*, 282–283. Williams observes that bookland and inherited land were not distinguishable by the eleventh century: the land was inalienable.

The third paragraph of the Alfredian introduction gives something resembling an introduction in that it announces Augustine's authorship of the Latin and (erroneously) calls him Bishop of Carthage, though he was active there. The voice is accurate in saying that Augustine made two books of *Soliloquiorum* about his *ingepanc* ("thinking"). The voice defines *Soliloquiorum* as books about Augustine's *smeaunge and tweonunga* ("reflections and doubts"), offering an abstract summary indicating how *Gesceadwisnes* ('Reason') answered Augustine's mind when it doubted anything, or wished to know something that it had not understood previously. The tone or register of the third paragraph is significantly different from that of the first two: no figurative language or metaphors, but rather matter-of-fact bibliographical information. The definition or description of *Soliloquiorum* does not quote Augustine directly about the self-conscious method of his book, but it does suggest that the voice knows about it from Book II.7.14 (at least) where through Reason, Augustine explains that by questioning and answering himself he can seek the truth with God's help.³⁹

The Second Introduction: Augustine's Prayer, *Deus Universitatis Conditor*

The *Soliloquies* moves directly into the opening of a rendering of the Latin, which is at this point something like the middle of a conversation between "Augustine"⁴⁰ and Reason. Augustine indicates that he has been thinking of many and various things and seeking his own self ("memetipsum"), what his good was and what evil was to be avoided, and then a voice, outside of him or inside, spoke to him. Suddenly present and identified, but not quite identified as *the* voice, Reason begins a dialogic process, giving Augustine the advice to write down everything he was thinking about to preserve properly what he might have discovered and to pray for help. The advice is an outline of how to proceed, beginning with a prayer for health and help ("salute et auxilium") and

39 Ed. Hörmann, 63: "...enim neque melius quaeri veritas possit quam interrogando et reponendo..." [truth cannot be better pursued than by question and response...]. Augustine is aware that he has created a new form, giving the word and idea to "soliloquy": "...quoniam cum solis nobis loquimur, Soliloquia vocari atque inscribi volo, novo quidem et fortasse duro nomine, sed ad rem demonstrandum satis idoneo..." ("since we are talking among ourselves I wish it to be called and entitled 'Soliloquies', indeed a new and hard name, but suitable enough to indicate the matter at hand").

40 Stock, *Augustine's Inner Dialogue*, observes, 142: "The invented nature of the open dialogue is symbolized by its chief fictional character—Augustine."

continuing through a summary conclusion without particular regard for encouragement from a large number of readers. Augustine agrees to follow Reason's advice. Watson observes that Augustine's prayer is part of the philosophical tradition, where it is "stylistic usage" in the late Platonists.⁴¹ Augustine makes no overt mention of this usage, and so neither does the Alfredian voice. The prayer is Augustine's proper Introduction to his dialogue, which means that the Old English has two introductions formally in its own creation and in its rendering of Augustine. The double introduction has precedent: for the *Life of Antony* by Athanasius, Evagrius provides a prologue to his translation undermining the idea of a literal translation, while at the opening of the Old English *Life of Mary of Egypt* an anonymous Old English commentator gives a brief account of how Paul of Naples translated her life from the Greek into Latin.⁴² As noted above, Stirniman transforms Augustine's Prayer into a 284-line poem, which he sees as structured in several major sections and smaller links. Having obviously omitted the opening interchange between Augustine and Reason, Stirniman begins the poem with the first major section, an exordium of six lines, and then moves into the first of the four meditations. This resurrected poem, so to speak, can display Augustine's flair for rhetorical balance and artful repetition as in the first twelve lines:

Deus, universitatis conditor,
 praesta mihi,
 primum ut bene te rogem,
 Deinde ut me agam dignum
 5 quem exaudias
 postremo ut liberer.
 Deus, per quem omnia,
 quae per se non essent,
 tendunt ad esse;
 10 Deus, qui ne id quidem,

41 Watson, *Soliloquia*, 165–167, quoting Plotinus, *Enneads*, V.1.6ff: "In venturing an answer [to the most difficult questions], we must first invoke God Himself, not in loud word but in that way of prayer which is always within our power, leaning in the soul towards Him by aspiration, alone towards the alone."

42 Evagrius' translation is readily accessible in *Early Christian Lives*, ed. and trans. Carolinne White (London: 1988), 7. The Old English *Life of Mary of Egypt* is available in *Ælfric's Lives of the Saints*, ed. Walter W. Skeat, EETS OS 76, 82, 94, 114 (repr. in two vols., London: 1966), vol. 2, 23B. For four studies on the *Life* consult Donald Scragg (ed.), *The Old English Life of Mary of Egypt*, OEN Subsidia 33 (2005). See Irvine for a discussion of "frames," Chapter 5.

quod se invicem perimit,
perire permisit...⁴³

Embedded in these lines are Neoplatonic ideas about God and Creation that are challenging to trace and beyond the scope of this chapter. As an extract from the poem, this passage suggests the parallelism and balance of clauses that could have been possible for an Old English poet to seek to replicate and to turn into the vernacular. These few lines suggest something of the incantatory effect of Augustine's prayer, which effect clearly asks for further study.

The Alfredian Flair for Metaphor: Three More Examples

The opening of *Soliloquies* with a complicated metaphor deriving in part from Neoplatonic diction of *hyle/materia* is a daring rhetorical move that is a distinctive part of the translator's approach to the original Latin. It is his *curiosa felicitas* (or at least his trademark). In her study of tone, Ruth Waterhouse analyzes "Ship, Anchor-Cable, and Anchor," "Lovers and Clothes," and "Lord and King" (her headings).⁴⁴ Here I would take a second look at "ship" and "clothes," and offer "roads" in substitution for "Lord and King."⁴⁵ The three case studies throw special light from different directions on the translator's work.

The metaphor of the ship, along with cables and anchors, takes a point of departure just after Reason and Augustine dismiss the Academics and their skepticism. The topic under discussion changes into a question of epistemology. Reason asks if Augustine learned with the eyes or with the mind, Augustine answering "with both" and explaining that eyes brought him to understanding and that he stopped looking with the eyes for he could understand more after the eyes fixed what was to be learned in his mind. The Alfredian voice slides into the comparison with a ship bringing a man to shore who sees that it will go easier for him to let the ship stand than to travel on land. This added simile

43 "God, Maker of the universe, first help me that I pray to you properly, then that I be worthy, whom you hear, and that at the last you free me. (I call to you) God, through Whom all things that through themselves could not be, proceed to be; God, who does not allow to perish that which annihilates itself," ed. Stirnimann, *Grund unde Gründer* 42.

44 Ruth Waterhouse, "Tone in Alfred's Version of Augustine's *Soliloquies*," in *Studies in Earlier Old English Prose*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany, NY 1986), 47–85, at 63–80.

45 Susan Hitch, "Alfred's Cræft: Imagery in Alfred's Version of Augustine's *Soliloquies*," *Journal of the Department of English, University of Calcutta* 22 (1986–87): 130–147, reads Alfred's use of metaphors. I share her many observations. Her description of "extended metaphors" corresponds in the main with my "open metaphors."

receives immediate amplification with something like a conclusion, “Augustine” observing that it seems easier to travel by a ship on land than to learn any “science” with the eyes and without reason. The Latin differs significantly from the Old English, which does not render the apposite idea that Augustine’s footsteps were shaky when he stepped on land—a natural enough image reflecting on the transmission of knowledge. In a key addition Reason develops the comparison of the ship further by citing the anchor cable: one must look with the eyes of the mind to God just as a ship’s anchor-cable is stretched from the ship to the anchor and just as the anchor is fastened to the land; if the ship is on the sea, a sturdy cable will hold it tight when one end is fastened to land and one to the ship. In this part of the addition the metaphor seems to be less about the acquisition of knowledge or communication with God than about stability in difficult times. The metaphor of the “ship” is carrying too much variable meaning, or perhaps a logical step between staying fastened on God and the ship is missing (or assumed). Augustine asks: what are the mind’s eyes? Reason responds with something like an iconographic answer:

...gesceadwisnesse, to-æacan oðrum creftum

Ða cwæð ic: hwæt sint þa oðre creftas?

Ða cwæð heo: Wysdom, and eadmeto, and wærscipe, and gemetgung, rihtwisnes and mildheor(t)nes, gesceadwisnes, gestaðþines and wel-wilnes, clenes and forheafdnes. (62.5–9)⁴⁶

Augustine frets about how he would be able to obtain these anchors without further instruction. The dialogue then moves off to consider this issue of further instruction, wherein it is stated that an abiding faith, a just hope, and a full love are necessary to see God with eyes of the mind whole. Yet below the surface, the metaphor of the ship carries on. Reason overtly reminds Augustine of the anchor-cable, one end fastened to land, the other to the ship. Exactly what the application of the metaphor might be is somewhat elusive. What is not elusive is the recall of the total metaphor. Reason now says that faith, hope, and love are the three anchors “...þe þæt scyp ðes modes healdað on gemang ðam brogan þara yða” [which stabilize the ship of the mind among the terror of the waves, 68.4], but earlier Reason had told Augustine of a dozen other anchors. Here Reason moves from the terror of the waves to an almost

46 “...reason and all and the other virtues’. Then I said: ‘What are the other virtues?’ Then she said: ‘Wisdom, humility, honor, moderation, righteousness, mercy, prudence, constancy, benevolence, purity, and abstinence.’”

gratuitous remark that the misfortunes of the world are not eternal. The equivalence of storms and misfortunes, while easy enough, comes unexpectedly; the Old English has a metaphoric substratum that makes the connection perhaps only in the mind of the translator. There is a further elaboration with a simile: "swa swa scypes hlaforð, þonne þæt scyp ungetæslicost on ancre rit and seo sæ hreohost byð, þonne wot he gewiss smelte wedere towærd" (68.6–8).⁴⁷ The meaning of this brief passage seems to be a *non sequitur*. What had been a master metaphor about eyes of the mind, knowing God, and virtues now becomes something about misfortunes. The taut cable is more in service of description than in coherent analogue.

While the ship metaphor is ambitious in itself and has a long presence in this part of the *Soliloquies*, the metaphor of "roads," extensive as it is, has a relatively clean rhetorical line. Reason pushes Augustine to admit that he freely loves wisdom above all other things. He follows up after some amplification, saying "Ic þe mæg tecan æac oðre bysne be þam wisdom" ("I can teach you other illustrations about wisdom," 77.4–5). The word *bysne*, according to the *Dictionary of Old English*, carries in its third complex of meanings "example, illustration, analogy, parable, simile," which obviously indicates the translator's awareness of rhetorical figures.⁴⁸ The grand illustration involves the possible locations of the king, be it town, or council or army, or whether Augustine thinks they go to the king on one road (the parallelism is not exact). This last comment introduces a long string of alternatives laced with anaphora. To cite just one example:

sume cumað swiðe feorran, and habbað swiðe læ(n)gne weig and swiðe yfelne and swiðe earfoðferne; sume habbað swiðe langne and swiðe rihtne and swiðe godne. Sume habbað swiðe scortne, and þeah wone and nearon and fuulne; sume habbað scordne and smeðne and rihtne... (77.8–11)⁴⁹

The repetition of *sum* and its forms along with *swiðe* keeps a tight control on the passage and almost hammers home the theme of "different roads."⁵⁰ The passage is reminiscent of the *Gifts of Men* and its reliance on a *sum*-pattern.⁵¹

47 Quotations are keyed to ed. Carnicelli, page and line(s).

48 DOE, s.v.

49 "some come from afar, and have a road very long, very bad, and very difficult; some have a very long and very straight and very good road. Some have a very short and nevertheless hard and narrow and foul one; some have a short, smooth, and straight one."

50 See Ronald J. Ganze, "The Individual in the Afterlife," 21–40.

51 George Philip Krapp and Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie (eds.), *The Exeter Book*, ASPR 3 (New York: 1967), 137–140.

The various patterns lead to a rhetorical completion: “swa hit bið æac be þam wisdom” [“so is it also about wisdom,” 77.15], so it would appear, as the roads become the various paths to wisdom, far or near. Heretofore the emphasis has been on how to get to the king. If the thematic summary is that there are the many paths to see the king, the connection to the king, which is reiterated with another comparison (“swa swa”) does not seem to flow cogently from its antecedents. There are two *swa*-clauses that compete for the closure of the comparison. The metaphor of the roads is nevertheless tighter even with its many elements ordered by repetition.

Certainly the most startling metaphor in *Soliloquies* is the Alfredian elaboration on the theme of true lovers of wisdom.⁵² Reason asks Augustine (I.xiii.22) in a tone of uncertain sharpness, “What sort of lover of wisdom are you?” [“qualis sis amator sapientiae?”]. Reason continues with a comparison to a love affair between Augustine and any woman who might be the object of Augustine’s desire. The description of the affair has its sensual moments as Reason projects upon Augustine what he might want to see: wisdom, *quasi nudam* [“as if naked”], *nullo interposito velamento* [“without a veil between”], with a chaste look and embrace, as seen by her fewest and most favored lovers. The premise that a carnal love affair is an analogue to the pursuit of wisdom presents not a little difficulty, particularly as one begins to imagine exactly what are the points of comparison and how can there be any sort of chastity. (It is presumably helpful that *sapientia* is gendered female.) Reason turns the matter around, now seeing a real affair from the point of view of a woman who is expecting the enamored Augustine to be on fire for her alone (“nisi solam arseris”). Given Augustine’s well known bouts with carnality, the presence of a sensual or erotic metaphor complex should surprise only somewhat. The Alfredian voice, however, takes his cue and elaborates upon the central idea with further details. The Reason of the *Soliloquies* intervenes and clarifies what the Reason of the *Soliloquia* meant. And so the first elaboration is that a lover prefers to kiss the beloved on the bare body than on the clothes that might interpose themselves. This observation is an explanation of how lovers behave, which is immediately returned to the metaphoric level as Reason explains that wisdom shows nakedness seldom and to very few men. As if to underline the major point, Reason says “Ac ic nat hu þu hym onfon mage mid geglofedum handum” [“I do not know how you might be able to receive it with gloved hands,” 76.2] The reference to gloved hands presumably is a generalized comparison to indicate the difficulty, if not impossibility, of direct knowledge of wisdom. For Augustine the portrayal of the carnality is painful but successful,

52 Waterhouse, “Tone,” 68–71.

for Augustine now confesses he loves wisdom for its own sake and with free will. The discussion of naked wisdom receives a brief recapitulation in *Soliloquies*, where the Alfredian voice repeats through Reason how wisdom without the impediments of cloth and with bare hands can see wisdom. Waterhouse aptly characterizes this metaphor: "Though [Alfred] does still convey the basic point of the Latin, he does so in such a sensuous and emotive way that he crowds out the literal level of intellectual desire, ignoring logical problems (such as wisdom's relationship back to the lover) in the immediate appeal to erotic experience."⁵³ Waterhouse is describing a metaphor that whatever its complications has been effective as an early example of a *discordia concors*.

The Personal Dimension: Toothache and Friends

At the same time that *Soliloquia* and *Soliloquies* maintain an abstract, philosophical discourse, the two texts feature apparent personalist themes. The Augustine of both texts complains about a toothache, the Old English reading: "Toðæcce me forwyrnde ælcra leornunga" ["A toothache ruined every kind of learning," 75.4]. The Latin seems more direct and forceful: "...acerrimo his diebus dentium dolore torquerer" ["These days I am tormented by a very severe toothache"].⁵⁴ This bolt of realism establishes a common bond with any reader who has ever had a toothache, while it participates in the construction of an Augustinian persona that is accessible and human. Augustine has other health problems that are comparatively more elusive. *Soliloquies/Soliloquia* both mention Augustine's ill health ["to unhal," 49.18] before Augustine's prayer without specifying what it is. The discussion of the toothache has ultimately a moral meaning, for both Augustines cite Cornelius Celsus for the observation that the supreme good is wisdom and the supreme evil is bodily suffering ["summum bonum esse sapientiam, summum autem malum dolorum"; "Ðæra sawle is se besta creft wisdom and þæs lichaman þæt wyrste þing unhele"].⁵⁵ In the Latin and Old English the stress seems to be that illness impedes study/meditation, while in *Confessions* IX.2.4 the problem seems to be more threatening. Augustine had developed a lung condition with breathing difficult, chest pains, changed voice, and speechlessness. Peter Brown considers it "more than probable" that Augustine was developing the physical

53 Waterhouse, "Tone," 70.

54 Ed. Hörmann, 32 (my translation).

55 Ed. Carnicelli, 75.13–14; ed. Hörmann, 33.

manifestations of a nervous breakdown.⁵⁶ It is speculation to note that Alfred too had suffered illness, as his biographer Asser describes in chapters 74 and 91 of the life of King Alfred, at one point identified as “piles.”⁵⁷ Prayer likewise proved efficacious for Alfred.

Friendship is a key theme in both versions, if with some interesting variations. Even before Augustine’s prayer Reason suggests the conditions under which Augustine can pursue his study, viz. solitude. In the Old English Reason amplifies the conditions by naming “a few wise and skilful men” who would not hinder but rather would help Augustine, to which advice Augustine responds that he has no such wise men or others, nor leisure nor a suitable place for his work.⁵⁸ The role of friends will take on different shapes throughout the main body of the *Soliloquies*. In the first encounter of a substantive sort Reason and Augustine engage in a philosophical skirmish over the idea of the soul and the connection with friends that has elements of donnish humor. Reason lays minor traps in language and definition. Here is a key exchange:

R. Non igitur amas amicos tuos?

A. Quo pacto eos possum amans animam non amare?

R. Hoc modo ergo et pulices et cimices amas?

A. Animam me amare dixi, non animalia.

R. Aut homines non sunt amici tui aut eos non amas; omnis enim homo animal et animalia te non amare dixisti.⁵⁹

The absurd line of reasoning likely comes from a school room exercise. The wordplay involving words beginning with *an* or *am* cues the light touch of the

56 Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: 1967), 109. Joanne McWilliam summarizes controversies in “Cassiciacum Dialogues,” *Augustine through the Ages*, 135–143.

57 Asser’s *Life of King Alfred, together with the Annals of St Neots*, ed. W.H. Stevenson (Oxford: 1959), Chapters 74, 88–90, Chapters 91, 76–79. For a translation with helpful notes see “Asser’s Life of King Alfred,” trans. K&L 69–109, at 88–90, 100. David Pratt, “The Illnesses of King Alfred the Great,” *ASE* 30 (2001): 39–90, offers a full study with special emphasis on Carolingian connections.

58 Carnicelli, *Soliloquies*, 49–50.

59 R. Do you not love your friends, then?

A. How can I not love them and love the soul?

R. Do you love fleas and bugs in this same way?

A. I said I love the soul—the *anima*—not animals.

R. Either men are not your friends or you do not love them, for, every man is an animal, and you said you do not love animals. (Ed. Hörmann, 12; trans. Gilligan, 151.)

passage, but while the citation of fleas and bugs can translate, the *an/am* word-play cannot. The translator could not overcome the limits of language, whether he wanted to turn the Latin into the vernacular or not.

Peter Brown comments that Augustine had gathered together an “ill-sorted company for a life of philosophical *otium*” that had been planned for Cassiciacum.⁶⁰ With such a small group there could be a tendency to personify and allegorize the participants in the resultant literature, but the tendency is not there. An interchange on friends and their importance to “Augustine” suggests a balanced moral view. The Reason of *Soliloquia* asks whether for the love of friends Augustine would not take up their temptations, notably wealth. Augustine says he would, if otherwise he would not have their companionship. Remarkably (perhaps) Reason calls Augustine’s response reasonable and right.⁶¹ The Reason of *Soliloquies* pursues the matter further, asking directly why Augustine loves his friends so much, or what he loves in them, or whether he loves them for their own sake or for some other thing.⁶² Augustine responds with a suitable intellectual/moral humility:

Ic hi lufige for freondscype and for geferædenne, and þa þeah ofer æalle oðre, þe me mæstne fultum doð to ongyttane and to witanne gesceadwisnesse and wisdom, æalre mæst be gode and beo urum saulum. Forðam ic wot þæt ic mæg æð mid heora fultume æfter spurian þonne ic butan mæge.⁶³

Reason *anticipates* possible opposition from friends, but Augustine shoots back that he will teach them so that they will. To other objections from Reason Augustine remains steadfast. Augustine has his anxieties and fears, which involve his friends. The Latin and the Old English are close in relating them. Three things have troubled him: that he must part with the friends he loves most, that he will be sick, that he will die. The Old English adds the practical note that his friends may part *from him* “either for life or for death” and further notes that the sickness could be known or unknown.⁶⁴ Reason observes that

60 Brown, 119: “a pious old woman, two uneducated cousins, and two private pupils, aged about 16.”

61 Carnicelli, *Soliloquies*, 74.

62 Carnicelli, *Soliloquies*, 74.

63 “I love them for friendship and for companionship, and above all others I love those who most help me to understand and to know reason, and wisdom, most of all about God and about our souls. For I know that I can more easily pursue Him with their help than without it.” Carnicelli, *Soliloquies*, 74.

64 Carnicelli, *Soliloquies*, 74.

after Augustine's own reason and God, Augustine loves the life of his friends next, and continues that Augustine's sadness stems in part from not having as many friends as he would like. No member of Augustine's Cassiciacum entourage plays a direct part in the exchanges between Reason and Augustine, and in the Latin Alypius is mentioned five times.⁶⁵ There would appear to be only four mentions in the Old English, but Alypius is helpfully described as "þin cniht," given that he would otherwise be unknown to the Old English audience.⁶⁶ The theme of friends and friendship establishes a humanized Augustinian persona, which in turn supports the accessibility of the general Augustinian argument. The ostensible personal dimension counters abstract meditation.

Soliloquies and the Old English Boethius⁶⁷

Carnicelli, Hargrove, and Hubbard all present evidence in parallel columns to indicate the close verbal relationship between the *Soliloquies* and the *Boethius*.⁶⁸ Since Carnicelli is more recent and offers more evidence, his nine pages of analysis will shape the following discussion. The list that Carnicelli assembles is selective and not without some difficulties, but at the same time it is discriminatory in weighing the kind and nature of the verbal correspondences. Thus, there are five major categories according to Carnicelli (29–37):

- A. Translation passages in *Soliloquies* and *Boethius* close in phrasing despite different Latin sources.
- B. Original passages in *Soliloquies* and *Boethius* corresponding in thought, and sometimes in phrasing.
- C. Original passages in *Soliloquies* corresponding in thought and phrasing to translation passages in the *Boethius*.
- D. Similar treatment of dialogue in both the *Soliloquies* and *Boethius*.

65 Ed. Hörmann, "Index Nominum," 233. Though important in the *Soliloquies*, the full force of Augustine on friends and friendship comes later when he writes in *Confessions* vi.16.26: "...nec esse sine amicis poteram beatus...quos utique amicos gratis diligebam vicissimque ab eis me diligi gratis sentiebam" [I could not find happiness...unless I had these friends. And yet I certainly loved them for their own sakes, and I felt that they loved me for my sake in return].

66 Carnicelli, *Soliloquies*, 58.

67 For an overview of the *Old English Boethius* and its presence in Old English literature, see my "Boethius's Influence in Anglo-Saxon England," 221–254. The connection with the *Soliloquies* is not provided there, but rather is offered here.

68 *Soliloquies*, ed. Carnicelli, 29–37; ed. Hargrove, xxxiv–xxxvi; Hubbard, "The Relation."

- E. Both works are in general correspondence as to intention and method of translation.

These broad characterizations allow in some instances further elaboration. Thus, correspondent original passages (=B) admit of five areas of special interest (31–32):

1. The idea that God governs the universe.
2. Comparisons between angels and men's souls.
3. The idea that rewards in the next life will be a function of individual merit.
4. Additions that show knowledge of a royal life.
5. The use of nautical analogies.

Treatment of the dialogue (=D) yields these examples (34–37)

1. Similar transitions.
2. Summary statements.
3. Expressions of approval or disapproval of Reason.
4. Personal speeches by Augustine.

Carnicelli is aware of a major trap in describing the relation of *Soliloquies* and *Boethius* that is a function of chronological priority. *Soliloquies*, perhaps written later than *Boethius*, may be correspondent to it because the human agent behind the production of *Soliloquies* copied his own work (or that of another in the *Boethius*). To his credit Carnicelli calls attention to the possibility when warranted, though he does agree with Hubbard that the author borrowed from his own translation but in, more likely, an unconscious process. The rhetorical similarities in the treatment of the dialogue form seem in general not to be that significative. The virtually formulaic “ac ic þe wolde acsian” [“but I would want to ask you”], cited by Carnicelli (35) twice in *Soliloquies* and three times in *Boethius*, is situational and conversational as is “ac ic wolde witan” [“but I would want to know”], cited by Carnicelli essentially eleven times in *Soliloquies* and twice in *Boethius*. The summary statement “eall hit is soð þæt ðu segst” [“all that you say is true”], cited by Carnicelli (36) once in *Soliloquies* and three times in *Boethius*, is likewise a formulaic, rhetorical marker. Some “personal speeches” may suggest a relation, but are they close enough?⁶⁹

69 References to *Soliloquies* are to Carnicelli by page and line, and to *Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, by chapter and line. These examples are from Carnicelli, *Soliloquies*, 29–37.

Example 1 *Sol*: Ac þreo þing me habbað swiðost gedrefed...(71.1)
Bo: Ic eom swiðe gedrefed mid ðisse spræce...(38.130–31)
 Sum tweo me hæfð swið gedrefed...(1.374.11)

The “hook” here is the key word *gedrefed*, which occurs in descriptions of mental turmoil, but the remaining parts of the sentences go in different directions. And also

Example 2 *Sol*: Ic ne ongyte nane trimðe ne on mode ne on lichaman,
 ac æom fulnah ormod...(80.18–19)
Bo: Ac ic eom nu giet on micle maran gedrefednesse geunrotsud, ful-
 neah oþ ormodnesse...(41.38–39)

Are these similarities distinctive enough, or are they unsupportive of a direct relation between the two works? The suggestion here is their formulaic cast does not readily support a connection.

Carnicelli cites some six original passages in *Soliloquies* corresponding to translation passages in *Boethius*. An apparent correspondence exists in the rendering of the opening of the famous hymn in Boethius 3m9 “O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas / Terrarum caelique sator...” *Boethius* reads:

Bo: þu ðe ealle þine gesceafta gesewenlice and eac ungesewenlice wunderlice gesceope and gesceadwislice heora weltst...(33.142–44)⁷⁰

The Boethian opening interweaves words from the Nicene Creed, “visible and invisible,” which is manifestly a Christian insertion in a Neo-Platonic text. The apparent equivalent in *Soliloquies* quite misses the insertion and goes in another direction:

Sol: Forðam he swa micla and swa manega and swa wundorlice gesewena gesceapen hæfð, and þam æallum stiorð and hi æalle gemetgað, and oððre hwile gegiered myð winsumestum wlitum, ðam oðre hwile eft ongiereð and geungewlitegað...(86.9–13)⁷¹

70 “Thou who thy whole creation, visible and invisible, miraculously created and who rules the with reason...”

71 “For he has created so great and so many and so miraculous visible things, and directs them and governs them and at one time adorns them with most beautiful appearances and at other times in turn he takes (them) away.”

The omission of “ungesewenlice” is significant for the meaning of the hymn. Did the translator simply miss the point, or was he perhaps distracted by his expansion of the theme of “beautiful creation”? The theological point in this context would appear to be telling. Conversely, the relation of *Soliloquies* and *Boethius* may not be telling when both texts compare men and angels on the matter of souls. One might argue here that it is a commonplace in theology that men and angels have souls that have a beginning and no end and that both are free beings. Thus, two sets of examples:

1. *Sol*: se hæft gesceapena twa æce gesceafta, þæt sint, engelas and manna sawwela, þam he sealde sumne dæl ecra gyfa, swilcra swilcenu wisdom is and rihtwisnes...(82.14–16)
Bo: Oðer ðing is ece, þæt hæfð fruman and næfð nænne ende...þæt sint englas and monna saula...(42.16–18)
2. *Sol*: twa gesceadwissa and æce gesceafta gesceapena swa swa ær sædon, þæt sint. engelas and manna saula...(85.16–17)
Bo: Forðam he gesceop twa gesceadwisa gesceafta frio, englas and men...(41.25–26)

Carnicelli pairs the passages as above, but they could just as easily be matched differently with no detracting from his overall point. But are the verbal resemblances close enough to sustain the view that there is probable cause for specific connections? Perhaps it is a judgment call in some cases and the benefit of the doubt in others. Since there are many more cases of possible relations suggested by Carnicelli beyond those presented here, further study might allow for the development of the preponderance of evidence. There is still more work to be done.

Whether or not one allows for “hard evidence” and “soft evidence” in verbal correspondences between *Soliloquies* and *Boethius*, there is a commonality in the overall treatment of text and commentary. As I have suggested elsewhere, the *Boethius* that has come down to us would not have been possible without a commentary tradition.⁷² The “author” of the *Boethius* presents a text as understood, i.e., it comes with explicit or implicit commentary, variously embedded. Thus, in the transference of *Consolation* III.m.9, the 28 lines of Latin hexameters, trailing Neoplatonic streams, become 281 lines of Old English, expanding to include medieval cosmology and psychology, along with

72 Paul E. Szarmach, “The *Timaeus* in Old English,” in *Lexis and Texts in Early English Studies Presented to Jane Roberts*, ed. Christian Kay and Louise M. Sylvester (Amsterdam: 2001), 255–267; Szarmach, “Boethius’ Influence,” 230–236.

several other themes and ideas. An intervention into the Boethian text of special note is the substitution of Weland, the goldsmith of Germanic myth, for Fabricius in a passage on transitory fame.⁷³ The author of the *Boethius* also receives the story of Orpheus as his own.⁷⁴ In other words the *Boethius*-author does not fetishize the text, recognizing no line in the original text that he may not cross. The situation of the *Soliloquies*-author is similar with the key exception that there is no known commentary on the *Soliloquia* that could help the interpreter. The *Soliloquies*-author must supply in effect his own commentary, bringing into his work his own knowledge and his own thematic interests. For him the text of the *Soliloquia* is no holy, untouchable object.

Other Sources and Book III

The source relationships between the *OE Boethius* and the text of the *Soliloquies* have their complexities and their subtleties. By comparison, other source connections would seem to be somewhat more straightforward, or if one wishes to say it, scholarship needs to take another go at these sources with method and criteria. Carnicelli gives a succinct account of the sources in his introduction and in his running commentary.⁷⁵ Aside from the source-text *Soliloquia* and the *Consolation* in either language, Carnicelli notes Gregorian texts: *Dialogues*, *Pastoral Care*, *Moralia* and the *Homily* on Luke 16:19–31. Jerome's Vulgate and his *Commentary* on Luke are either certain or possible, respectively. *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici* continues source criticism into the online era where Godden gives a summary overview that varies from Carnicelli in some respects. Noting that *Soliloquies* is a free rendering of Book I, that Book II is less beholden to the Latin and rather independent, and that Book III owes nothing to *Soliloquia*, he adds Julian of Toledo's *Prognosticon*, the *City of God*, and *Retractationes* to the list.⁷⁶ The *Fontes* records, some 125, cited and correlated with the Endter text, include Bede (one each, *De natura rerum*, *De temporis ratione*), and Isidore (*Etymologies*). *Fontes* corresponds to Carnicelli in other respects.⁷⁷ Gilligan

73 See Discenza, *The King's English: Strategies of Translation in the Old English Boethius* (Albany, NY: 2005), 16.

74 Godden and Irvine, *Boethius*, vol. 2, 415–416.

75 Carnicelli, *Soliloquies*, 28–29, and in the commentary, *passim*.

76 Godden, "The Sources of King Alfred's Old English Version of Augustine's Soliloquia (Cameron C.B.9.41)," 2001, *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici World Wide Web Register*, <http://fontes.english.ox.ac.uk>. Accessed 7 January 2012.

77 Godden, "The Sources of King Alfred's Old English Version of Augustine's Soliloquia."

observes that "Alfred was not content merely to translate; three-fourths of the work consists of his own interpolations."⁷⁸

The major sources of Book III, Augustine's *De videndo Deo* (= *Epistola* 147) and Gregory's *Homily* 40 on Luke 16:19–31, are the OE translator's interventions in an invented Book III. As Book II comes to a close and offers two transitional paragraphs in the OE, Augustine summarizes his progress to Reason and indicates that there is one topic dealing with *gewit* ("intellect," according to Hargrove) that needs discussion, viz. is *gewit* eternal? Reason's response is almost enthusiastic, citing *De videndo Deo* as the book to satisfy Augustine's need to know and giving the title in OE, *be godes ansyne*, as if the title were standard or recognizable. The work will provide the way in Book III, as Reason says: "Leorna þa boc; þonne findst þu hyt þær" ["learn the book! Then you will find it there," 92.19]. Yet, common scholarly opinion holds that the connection between Book III and the first two Books is not at all that clear. *DVD* comes from the pen of a more mature Augustinus, writing in 413 or 414, ostensibly in answer to Paulina, a pious woman who wanted to know whether God could be seen with the eyes of the flesh.⁷⁹ However highly Augustinus once regarded the dialogue form, this letter has a certain smoothness and polish without the interruptions of dialogue. Augustinus is no longer a philosopher or rhetorician but rather a Christian thinker of nearly some thirty years. His proof-texts are biblical, notably Matthew 5:8, "Blessed are the clean of heart because they shall see God," which is regularly cited in *Epistola* 147, and other Old and New Testament texts relevant to the main issues. We shall indeed see God because the Bible says so (Chapter 12). With the Bible so prominent, Augustinus often shows his skills as an exegete. These are necessary when the Bible presents contradictions and inconsistencies. Thus, we learn that God spoke to Cain, and how is it possible that Cain of all people was granted this privilege? The Bible sometimes says that no one has seen God, yet sometimes that some have. Augustinus is rather blunt: "But whoever saw God saw God because he appeared to whom he willed, when he willed, and in that form his will chose, while his nature remained hidden."⁸⁰

78 Gilligan, "Soliloquies," 339.

79 Alois Goldbacher edits *Epistula* 147, in CSEL 44 (Vienna: 1904), 274–331. Roland Teske translates *Letter* 147 in *Letters 100–155*, The Works of Saint Augustine (Hyde Park, NY: 2003) II/2, 317–349. Teske provides some notes and a helpful summary outline in sentence form. Other translations are: Mary Clark, trans. with Preface by Goulven Madec, *Augustine of Hippo: Selected Writings* (New York, Ramsey, Toronto: 1984), 365–402 (translation based on PL 33, 596–622); Wilfrid Parsons, trans., *Saint Augustine: Letters* vol. 3 (New York: 1953), 70–223.

80 Goldbacher, *Epistula* 147; trans. Teske, 328.

Time and again Augustinus cites Ambrose for doctrine and support, urging Paulina to side with him and Ambrose that the clean of heart will see God. As Godden notes, Alfred was far closer to the Augustine of later years than to the early Augustine who wrote *Soliloquia*.⁸¹ *Epistola 147* and *Soliloquia* are an uneven match in several ways. Yet there may have been enough to interest Alfred in *Epistola 147*. Certainly the theme of *eagan modes* ["eyes of the mind"] and related phrasal formulations in the Latin make it possible to consider them the connections between the two works.⁸² Miranda Wilcox makes a convincing case that the phrase *eagan modes* is traceable throughout the major Alfredian corpus, serving to chart the translator's development of his ideas of "seeing." In the *Soliloquia*, Augustine's theory of illumination is a tripartite hierarchy of corporeal vision, spiritual vision, and intellectual vision.⁸³ Carnicelli suggests that *DVD* may be present occasionally in Books I and II as well as Book III.⁸⁴ One can argue that *Epistola 147* was in the Alfredian air even before he sat down to render *Soliloquia*, but that when he came to using *Epistola 147*, the translator may have also seen the enormity of converting structure and theme of *Epistola 147*, as well as its length, to an OE version.

In *Fontes* Godden takes a more conservative line than Carnicelli regarding the presence of *Epistola 147*, noting a passage at the end (but not mentioning the evident minor overlap with 1 John).⁸⁵ The passage is a brief treatment of a side issue in epistemology, viz. can we believe something without ever seeing that something?, which is a potentially hard-headed quasi-realist position if one cannot:

me þincð nu þæt ic wite hwa Romeburh timbrode, and æac feala oðra
þinga þe ær urum dagum geweordon wæs, þa ic ne mæg æalla ariman.
Nat ic no ði hwa (Rome)burh timbrede þe ic self hyt gesawe, ne furdum
þæt nat hwilces cynnes ic eom, ne hwa min feder wæs oððe modor, buton

81 Godden, "Text and Eschatology in Book III of the Old English *Soliloquies*," 189.

82 Miranda Wilcox, "Alfred's Epistemological Metaphors: *eagan modes* and *scip modes*," *ASE* 35 (2006): 179–217, esp. 201–210.

83 Miranda Wilcox, "Alfred's Epistemological Metaphors," 203: "...first, sensation or corporeal vision was perception through bodily senses; secondly, cognition or spiritual vision was 'the faculty of the soul in which the mind expresses images of corporeal things' and judged 'sense objects by rational and eternal standards'; and, finally, intellection or intellectual vision was 'contemplation of eternal truths by the mind' through which man obtained knowledge of God, the soul, and virtues."

84 Carnicelli, *Soliloquies*, 28.

85 Godden, "The Sources of King Alfred's Old English Version of Augustine's *Soliloquia*."

be gesegenum. Ic wat ðæt min fæder me gestriende, and min modor me gebær. Nat ic hyt na þy þæt ic hyt self gesawe, ac forði þe hyt man me sæde. (97.5–110)⁸⁶

The passage is vintage early Augustine, freely based on *Epistola* 147.5 in manner and method. The OE translator in incorporating this passage has not forgotten his original source text.

The presence of Gregory's *Homily* 40 in Book III also requires special attention. In the Latin, the work is a running gloss on Luke 16:19–31, the parable of Dives, the rich man who, clothed in purple and linen, was buried in hell; and Lazarus, the beggar, who was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom.⁸⁷ The version in *Soliloquies* is compressed into an exemplum, not so much about generosity to the poor, but rather about friends and communicating to Dives' five brothers across the "great chaos" that torments and punishment await them for their misdeeds. Dives asks that Lazarus be sent to warn the brothers, but Abraham says sharply that the brothers have holy books to inspire belief. If the brothers do not believe them, they will not believe Lazarus. As particularly in Book I, Augustine and his friends comprise a major theme; so does an interest in what happens to soul and body at death. The presentation of these two major themes in the Lucan exemplum extend and continue Augustinian concerns. The treatment of the Lucan exemplum is illustrative of the norms of Alfredian composition. Although there are textual problems in Book III,⁸⁸ they do not mask the particular way "Alfred" goes about making the points he seeks

86 "It seems to me that I know who built Rome, and also many other things that came to pass before our day, all of which I cannot reckon. I do not know who built Rome which I myself saw, nor further I do not know of what kin I am, nor who my father was or my mother, except by what people say. I know that my father brought me into the world and that my mother carried me. I do not know it because I myself saw it, but because someone told me."

87 Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Evangelia*, ed. Raymond Étaix, CCSL 141 (Turnhout: 1999); *Gregory the Great: Forty Gospel Homilies*, trans. David Hurst, Cistercian Studies Series 123 (Kalamazoo, MI: 1990), 370–387. Hurst notes correspondences mainly with Bede's Commentary on Luke. Bede took much from Ambrose; for a list of parallels see Hurst 1990, 86–87. *Ambrose in Anglo-Saxon England with Pseudo-Ambrose and Ambrosiaster*, ed. Dabney Anderson Bankert, Jessica Wegmann, and Charles D. Wright, *OEN Subsidia* 25 (Kalamazoo, MI: 1997), esp. 32–34, gives much information on Ambrose in England.

88 Godden, "Text and Eschatology in Book III," 79–188, describes textual confusion explained by dislocation of leaves in an earlier manuscript. Accordingly, Godden proposes a substantial rearrangement offering a more coherent structure that goes beyond what Karl Jost had suggested. He gives a translation in Modern English incorporating his suggestions as an Appendix.

to make. The translator will not give the reader/hearer expository help with transitions, openings or closings, signals for developing arguments, among other things. Links between ideas may hide beneath the surface or are assumed to be “given” as part of author-audience communication. The Lucan exemplum is accordingly a key to the mode of composition in *Soliloquies*.

Godden’s analysis of the eschatology of Book III and particularly aspects of the afterlife confirms the integrity of the Book with Books I and II.⁸⁹ He makes a strong case, for example, for the importance of Julian of Toledo, known in Anglo-Saxon England and also used by Ælfric of Eynsham. Julian’s *Prognosticon* considers the state of the departed and the post-judgment world, in terms close to Alfred’s. Whatever Alfred may say regarding his debts to the fathers, one ought to understand the “bold nature of the undertaking.”⁹⁰

Conclusion

Summarizing the state of affairs in the middle 1980s, Gatch described the *Soliloquies* as “surely the most problematical of Alfred’s works” in which “the very great conceptual and source difficulties inherent in the Old English text are linguistically compounded by late orthography and morphology.”⁹¹ In this chapter I have sought to capitalize on recent advances in the study of the *Soliloquies* and its source-text to present a more contextual understanding of their relationship and those difficulties. The early Augustine is a separate challenge for any audience, fourth-century or twelfth or twenty-first, and the lyrical or meditative temper of the opening throws a special light on the opening and its independence as a text. The dialogic Latin, with its foundation in philosophical discourse, is an art of its own, unparalleled in Old English prose. The story of Dives and Lazarus talks about a “great chasm” between the saved and the damned: one might venture to say the Old English translator (if this is an adequate descriptor for him) tries to bridge the chasm of Latinity that he faces by abbreviation, but more actively by additions to the exposition. Here metaphor or more generally figurative language is a means to the desired end. Perhaps not all metaphors prove to be successful in clarifying Augustine’s generally more abstract prose. One must recall that the translator has no apparent commentary tradition to assist him as he does (assuming he is the translator of the *Boethius*) in rendering the *Boethius*. All in all, the Old English translator

89 Godden, “Text and Eschatology in Book III,” 189–205.

90 Godden, “Text and Eschatology in Book III,” 205.

91 Gatch, “King Alfred’s Version,” 17.

reaches an accommodation with his source text that can characterize him as a risk-taker. The *Soliloquies* would appear to be among the latest extant pieces of intellectual prose in the entire Old English corpus. As such, it points the way to what would have been the next development of the vernacular. Godden, linking *Boethius* and *Soliloquies* together, observes rightly that the two works are “intellectually ambitious and learned” enterprises that “go well beyond the range of their Latin predecessors and to attempt something remarkably adventurous—and creating in the process of the first English works of philosophy.”⁹² Ganze concludes his study aptly: “Rather than being a minor translation to be read alongside the *Boethius*, Alfred’s *Soliloquies* are an important touchstone in the development of medieval philosophy.”⁹³

92 Malcolm Godden, “The Alfredian Project and its Aftermath: Rethinking the Literary History of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries,” Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture, 15 January 2009, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 162 (2009): 93–122, at 122. Leslie Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies in the Vernacular and Latin Traditions* (Toronto, Buffalo: 2011), suggests some future directions.

93 Ganze, “The Individual in the Afterlife,” 37.

The Prose Translation of Psalms 1–50

Patrick P. O'Neill

Among the works conventionally attributed to King Alfred, the Old English prose translation of the first fifty Psalms, commonly known as the *Prose Psalms*, stands out for several reasons: its use of the vernacular to translate a highly influential book of the Old Testament; its strategy of translation, which combines a paraphrase with an elaborate set of interpretative guidelines; and its attempt to convey the poetic qualities of the Psalms with appropriate stylistic expression. Yet for all its exceptional interest, the *Prose Psalms* occupies an ill-defined status within the Alfredian canon, one more conducive to benign neglect than critical study. Admittedly, the work suffers from structural defects: it lacks a preface such as one finds introducing the other works attributed to Alfred, *Pastoral Care*, *Consolation*, *Soliloquies* and the *Introduction to the Laws*; and it is severely incomplete, containing only the first 50 of the 150 Psalms that constitute the Psalter. Nor does it help that its subject matter brings to mind the literal, word-for-word, interlinear Old English renderings frequently found inserted into Latin Psalters, which scarcely reveal an authorial voice, much less any original content. However, as will be argued below, the *Prose Psalms* employs strategies of translation and interpretation, supported by a rather modest but highly unconventional set of sources, which mark it as a work of notable independence authored by a writer with a clear instructional agenda.

As evident from recent scholarship on the *Prose Psalms*, interest has shifted decidedly from the study of sources and influences conducted by earlier scholars¹ to a focus on the question of authorship. The landmark study of Janet Bately, “Lexical Evidence for the Authorship of the *Prose Psalms* in the Paris Psalter,”² showed how the lexical choices in the *Prose Psalms*, while differing markedly from well-known groups of works defined by dialect or period (such as those of ninth-century Mercia or the late-tenth-century ‘Winchester School’)

1 Notably James W. Bright and Robert L. Ramsay, “Notes on the ‘Introductions’ of the West-Saxon Psalms,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 13 (1912): 520–558; and Robert L. Ramsay, “Theodore of Mopsuestia in England and Ireland,” *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 8 (1912): 452–497, at 467–470.

2 “Lexical Evidence for the Authorship of the *Prose Psalms* in the Paris Psalter,” *ASE* 10 (1982): 69–95.

and somewhat from a group of early-West-Saxon works, closely matched those of the group of works traditionally attributed to Alfred (*Pastoral Care*, *Consolation*, *Soliloquies* and *Introduction to the Laws*). Her conclusion that the work was Alfred's has won wide acceptance. Thus, Patrick O'Neill's edition of the *Prose Psalms* includes a chapter on authorship which, in advancing various types of evidence in support of Alfred, relies heavily on Bately's lexical findings.³ More recently, a book by David Pratt on Alfred's political thought devotes a full chapter to the *Prose Psalms*, situating the composition of that work within a context of Alfred's own personal and professional world.⁴

Dissenting voices about the place of the *Prose Psalms* in the Alfredian canon are nothing new; the surprise this time is that they have taken two radically different forms and reached disconcertingly different conclusions. Two papers co-authored by Paramjit S. Gill, Tim B. Swartz, and Michael Treschow questioned traditional approaches to establishing the Alfredian canon, advocating an alternative methodology which relies on statistical data for identifying authorial style. Using *Pastoral Care*, *Consolation*, and *Soliloquies* as three representative texts of the Alfredian canon, they calculated that "the clustering algorithm separates the disputed text 7 *The First Fifty Prose Psalms* from the Alfredian texts {1, 2, 3} 99% of the time," and concluded that the *Prose Psalms* could not be the work of Alfred.⁵ Yet this attempt to exclude the *Prose Psalms* from the Alfredian canon seems mild compared to the nihilist approach adopted by Malcolm Godden. Based on considerations of historical circumstances, lexical usage, and translation strategies, he answers the provocative title of his own article, "Did King Alfred Write Anything?" with the resoundingly negative conclusion that "Alfred did not 'write' anything."⁶

Both sets of objections (the limited and the absolute) to the Alfredian canon in general and the authorship of the *Prose Psalms* in particular, were

3 Patrick P. O'Neill, *King Alfred's Old English Prose Translation of the First Fifty Psalms* (Cambridge, MA: 2001), esp. 66–69 and 78. I take this opportunity to correct an error in the edition at Ps 40:3 (p. 149), where *Drihtne* should read *Drihten*.

4 "Tribulation and Triumph in the First Fifty Psalms," in David Pratt, *The Political Thought of King Alfred the Great* (Cambridge: 2007), 242–263. See also his "Problems of Authorship and Audience in the Writings of King Alfred the Great," which argues for the cohesion of the "Alfredian canon" (as defined by Bately) in Patrick Wormald and Janet L. Nelson (eds.), *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge: 2007), 162–191.

5 "A Stylometric Analysis of King Alfred's Literary Works," *Journal of Applied Statistics* 34 (2007): 1251–1258; and "King Alfred's Scholarly Writings and the Authorship of the First Fifty *Prose Psalms*," *Heroic Age* 12 (2009), <http://www.heroicage.org/issues/12/treschowgillswartz.php>.

6 Malcolm Godden, "Did King Alfred Write Anything?," *Medium Ævum* 76.1 (2007): 1–23.

addressed by Janet Bately.⁷ In the matter of the stylometric approach of the first camp, she pointed out that the seventeen high-frequency functional words chosen for analysis are fundamentally flawed as evidence since they can have different meanings, or represent different parts of speech. Moreover, the assumption on which that methodology is based, that “authors/translators use high-frequency words unreflectively in their writings,” is belied by the evidence that the author of the *Prose Psalms* made conscious stylistic and syntactical choices guided by his Latin original.⁸ On the subject of lexical differences between the *Prose Psalms* and other works of the Alfredian canon raised by the objecting parties, she argued that “looked at in context, both Latin and English,” they are “neither ‘remarkable’ nor ‘startling.’”⁹ One might add that apart from a few comments on lexical usage, Godden’s article does not really engage the *Prose Psalms*. It has nothing to say about the nature of the sources that went into its composition and how they were used; or about authorial strategies of translation and interpretation—and how they might differ from those which he discerned in the *Soliloquies* and the *Consolation*.¹⁰ As part of an ongoing process to better understand the *Prose Psalms*, the present paper will address these topics.

Strategies of Translation and Interpretation

To appreciate the challenges faced by the author of the *Prose Psalms*, one might begin by considering the meager tradition of vernacular biblical translation on which he could draw. True, there was a longstanding tradition of glossing the Psalms in Old English which may have begun as early as the eighth century, but that was mere word-for-word translating; the same Latin word received the same Old English translation regardless of context. Such glossing did not address the syntactical relationship between the lexemes which it glossed, much less the individual Psalm as a discrete composition with its own immediate context of circumstances of composition and authorship, as well as a large baggage of Christian commentary. In any case, there is no lexical evidence that the *Prose Psalms* reflect any influence from the vocabulary of the glossed

7 Janet Bately, “Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything?,” *Medium Ævum* 78.2 (2009): 189–215.

8 Bately, “Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything?,” 192–196.

9 Bately, “Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything?,” 196–204.

10 Perhaps because of his stated view that the *Prose Psalms* belong with “other works on the fringe of the [Alfredian] canon,” Godden, “Did King Alfred Write Anything?,” 9.

Psalters; indeed, its remarkable flexibility in translating the same Latin word with different Old English lexemes tells strongly against it.

Besides the normal challenges which faced the translator of any Latin text in conveying the meaning of the original, there were numerous stylistic difficulties proper to the Psalms, most of them related to their origins as verse compositions in Hebrew. Even after successive stages of translation from Hebrew into Greek and then into Latin, many of these peculiarities survived and had to be addressed by the translator into English. For example, the Psalms frequently mention nouns denoting body parts, such as arm (*brachium*), heart (*cor*), hand(s) (*manus*), and horn (*cornu*). In the original Hebrew these were intended to be read figuratively so that *cor*, for example, could mean “the heart of something,” *manus* “action or power” and *cornu* “strength.”¹¹ In virtually all of these cases the author of the *Prose Psalms* (hereafter referred to as “the paraphrast”) takes his cue from the commentators and supplies a figurative (allegorical) meaning. At other times, like other Western commentators who did not know Hebrew, he misses the idiom and translates literally, as in Ps 17:46, “*Ac þa ælðeodgan bearn me oft lugon*”¹² (“FILII ALIENI MENTITI SUNT MIHI”),¹³ where the verb *mentiri* denotes “to submit” in accordance with the Hebrew Psalter. What was a translator to make of Ps 11:3, “LABIA DOLOSA IN CORDE ET CORDE LOCUTI SUNT MALA,”¹⁴ where the repetition of CORDE reflects a Hebrew expression of emphasis? The paraphrast evidently wrestled with this verse, ending up with five clauses of explanation, “*Facen hi sprecað mid heora weolorum, for þam hi nabbað on heora mode þæt hi on heora muðe sprecað, ac þencað yfel, þeah hi hwilum tela cweðen.*”¹⁵

But what really set the Psalms apart was the challenge of interpretation. As much as one might argue by way of comparison that translating a work such as Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae* was hardly any different—and indeed might be more difficult because of its philosophical matter—the Anglo-Saxon translator of the latter had far more freedom. Most notably, contents could be modified by enlarging, by omitting and even by re-arranging them—as

11 See W[illiam] E. Plater and H.J. White, *A Grammar of the Vulgate* (Oxford: 1926), 11–27.

12 “But those alien people frequently lied to me.”

13 “The children that are strangers have lied to me.” Quotations from the Latin Psalms are given in block letters, and English translations are supplied (with minor modernizations) from the Douay-Rheims version, *The Holy Bible: Douay Rheims Version*, rev. Bishop Richard Challoner (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1971, repr. 1989).

14 “With deceitful lips and with a double heart have they spoken.”

15 “They utter lies with their lips because they do not hold in their mind what they speak in their mouth, but rather meditate evil—even though they sometimes speak well.”

evidently was the case with the Old English *Consolation*.¹⁶ Such flexibility was not an option for the translator of the Psalms because their status as Scripture, their use as a living text of Christian liturgy and devotion, and their pervasive application to Christ and to contemporary Christian living required fidelity to the text. Consequently, even the most insouciant translator would not have had the luxury of tampering with the structure of the text, while a conscientious translator could hardly ignore the issue of interpretation.¹⁷ Moreover, because the author of the *Prose Psalms* aimed at an organic translation—as evident from the work which he actually produced—he had to make decisions about which sources to choose and which to reject. He could not simply accumulate and juxtapose alternative (and conflicting) interpretations, the desperate recourse of many early medieval commentators on the Psalms whose works often consist of a medley of disparate interpretations and comments.

In theory there were a good number of Psalter commentaries available in the early medieval West which might have helped the paraphrast; in reality none could provide a model for the task which he undertook of simultaneous translation and interpretation. Some of them, at best, might provide a running commentary on the Psalms, verse by verse, but always selectively—rarely do they paraphrase the complete text. The longest and most ambitious of the Patristic Latin commentaries, Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, offers, as its title implies, a very full exposition—too full, indeed—of Augustinian reflections on a variety of topics presented in a highly discursive style. Jerome's two commentaries, *Tractatus siue Homiliae in Psalmos* and *Commentarioli in Psalmos*, are especially disappointing given his unique role as the translator of at least two versions of the Psalter; both commentaries are incomplete and highly selective in their choice of passages to expound. Cassiodorus' *Expositio in Psalmos* (strongly influenced by Augustine's work) with its marked predilection for allegorical readings does not usually provide a paraphrase; moreover, its preoccupation with mining the Latin text of the Psalms for rhetorical terms and tropes is distracting. Another very popular work, the anonymous *Glosa Psalmorum ex traditione Seniorum*, produced in southern Gaul in the early

16 See Godden, "Did King Alfred Write Anything?" 2.

17 See the comments of Bately, *The Literary Prose of King Alfred's Reign: Translation or Transformation?* OEN, Subsidia 10 (Binghamton, NY, 1984), 14–15, repr. in *Old English Prose: Basic Readings*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (New York and London: 2000), 3–27. On the possibility that Alfred's use of modal verbs simultaneously reflects both translation and interpretation, see Makoto Ichikawa, "Alfred's Addition of Modal Verbs in his Prose Translation of the First Fifty Psalms—with Special Reference to *Magan*," *Studies in Medieval English Language and Literature* 21 (2006): 97–120.

seventh century, was hardly suitable either.¹⁸ Although providing a fairly detailed commentary, it was heavily allegorical in a manner designed for monastic audiences. Similar criticisms could be directed at the Hiberno-Latin commentaries that have been proposed as immediate sources for the *Prose Psalms*. Though potentially attractive because of their historical and literal bias, they lack the continuous flow of commentary on individual verses that the paraphrast would have needed.

Despite these limitations the paraphrast approached his task as one of interpretation rather than paraphrase or mere translation. The difference between the two approaches is evident even from a cursory comparison between the *Prose Psalms* and the later (tenth-century) Old English Metrical Psalms. For example, compare their respective renderings of Ps 5:5, “MANE ADSTABO TIBI ET VIDEBO” (“In the morning I will stand before you, and will see”):

Metrical: *Ic þe æt stande ær on morgen/and ðe sylfne geseo*¹⁹;

Prose: *Ic stande on ærmergen beforan ðe æt gebede and seo þe (þæt is, þæt ic ongite þinne willan butan tweon and eac þone wyrce).*²⁰

Whereas the Metrical version gives a literal translation—the addition of *sylfne* was probably supplied for metrical and alliterative purposes—the *Prose Psalms* clarifies the context with the addition of *æt gebede*, while also supplying a combination of literal translation and allegorical interpretation for “VIDEBO” as perceiving and fulfilling God’s command.

A striking example of the paraphrast’s interpretative mindset is his treatment of Psalm 2. It was generally read by Christian commentators as messianic, an unambiguous forecasting of Christ’s Incarnation and Passion. Even die-hard disciples of the Antiochene school of exegesis who treated the Psalms as exclusively historical and literary texts conceded that Ps 2 was a prophecy of Christ. Thus, Theodore of Mopsuestia interpreted Ps 2 as David’s prophecy of all the evil things done by the Jews at the time of Christ’s Passion: “Beatus

18 Helmut Boese (ed.), *Anonymi Glosa Psalmorum ex traditione seniorum*, 2 vols. (Freiburg im Breisgau: 1992–94) and *Die Alte “Glosa Psalmorum ex traditione seniorum”* (Freiburg: 1982).

19 “I shall stand near to you early in the morning and I shall see you yourself,” Elliott van Kirk Dobbie (ed.), *The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems*, ASPR 6 (New York: 1942), 81.

20 “I shall stand in the early morning in your presence in prayer and shall see you—that is, that I shall understand your will without any doubt and moreover shall do it,” O’Neill, *King Alfred’s First Fifty Psalms*, 103.

dauid prophetans narrat omnia quae a Iudaeis passionis dominicae impleta sunt tempore.”²¹ In marked contrast the paraphrast of the *Prose Psalms* treated Ps 2 as purely historical, a narration of the hardships endured by David at the hands of his enemies, domestic and foreign. His consciousness of interpretation is evident in his translation of the semantically loaded word, *christum* (Ps 2:2), by “*he to hlaforde geceas and gesmyrede*,”²² an unambiguous and intentional reference to King David (rather than Christ) as indicated by the use of the word *hlaford* (rather than *Drihten*) with its denotation of secularity. His approach should be seen as a deliberate choice of interpretation rather than a default mode of literal translation.

Ps 44 shows the paraphrast in full interpretative mode, providing a remarkable example of how he reconciled the demands of literal paraphrase and (allegorical) interpretation. This Psalm was traditionally interpreted as messianic; certainly, its epithalamic imagery (reminiscent of the Song of Songs) made it very difficult to treat it other than allegorically. Translated literally, much of its contents did not make sense, beginning with the opening verse, “ERUCTAVIT COR MEUM VERBUM BONUM” (“My heart has uttered a good word”). The paraphrast’s strategy was to provide a literal translation first (“*Min heorte bealcet good Word*”), followed by an (allegorical) interpretation (“*þæt ys, good Godes bearn*”)²³ whose subordination to the literal rendering is indicated by prefixing “þæt ys,” a formula which effectively introduces a gloss on the main text. A similar dual approach is evident in Ps 44:9–10, “MYRRHA ET GUTTA ET CASIA A VESTIMENTIS TUIS/A DOMIBUS Eburneis ex quibus te delectaverunt filiae regum in honore tuo” (“Myrrh and stacte and cassia perfume your garments, from the ivory houses: out of which the daughters of kings have delighted you in your glory”), which is rendered first with a literal, then an allegorical interpretation introduced by “*tacniad*” (“signify”):

Myrre and gutta and cassia dropiað of þinum claðum and of þinum elpanbænenum husum on þæm þe gelufiað cynincga dohtor; þa þær wuniað for þinre lufan and for þinre weorðunga. (Þa wyrtegemang tacniad mistlicu mægen Cristes; and þæt hrægl tacnað Cristes lichaman; and þa

21 “Blessed David in prophecy narrates all the things that were carried out by the Jews at the time of the Lord’s Passion,” L. De Coninck (ed.), *Theodori Mopsuesteni Expositionis in Psalmos, Iuliano Aeculanensi Interprete in Latinum Uersae quae supersunt*, CCSL 88A (Turnhout, 1977), 10, 1–2.

22 “He whom He chose and anointed as lord.”

23 “My heart brings forth a good Word, that is, the excellent child of God.”

elpanbænenan hus tacniað rihtwisra manna heortan; para kynincga dohtor tacniað rihtwisra manna sawla.)²⁴

But more than other parts of the *Prose Psalms*, it is the Introductions which unambiguously indicate the author's interpretative purpose. By adding this element at the beginning of each Psalm (except Ps 1), he was directly addressing the issue of interpretation. The Introductions present a set of interpretative guidelines (Lat. *argumenta*) in Old English, formulated specifically for the individual Psalm. That these guidelines are not simply mechanical prompts is indicated by their influence on the attendant paraphrase, which in almost every Psalm reveals dependence on their interpretative directives. Such *argumenta*, a commonplace of early medieval biblical exegesis, were normally systematized into four interpretations, a literal/historical ('the narration of deeds'), a mystical ('the predicting of future events'), a moral/tropological ('the exhortation to right behavior') and an anagogical ('the intimation of eternal truths'). However, the Introductions of the *Prose Psalms* do not quite follow this conventional scheme. Take for example Intro. 15,

- 1° *Pone fifteoðan sealm Dauīd sang be his earfoðum, ægðer ge modes ge lichaman;*
 2° *and eft swa ilce Ezechias hine sang be his mettrumnesse, wilnode him to Gode sumre frofre;*
 4° *and swa deð ælc rihtwis mann þe hine singð on his earfoðum;*
 3° *and swa dyde Crist þa he hine sang.*²⁵

Here interpretation 1° is literal/historical: King David recounts his difficulties. Interpretation 4° is obviously moral, applying the Psalm to every righteous Christian; while interpretation 3° would loosely qualify as mystical (specifically, Christological) since it refers to the future events (from the psalmist's perspective) of Christ's Incarnation and death. But for interpretation 2°,

24 "Myrrh and stacte and cassia drop from your clothes and from your ivory houses in which the daughters of the kings delight you, those who dwell there out of love and out of veneration for you. (Those blends of spices signify the numerous virtues of Christ; and that garment signifies Christ's body; and those ivory houses signify the hearts of upright men; the daughters of the kings signify the souls of upright men)," O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 155.

25 "David sang the fifteenth Psalm about his difficulties, both mental and physical; and subsequently Ezechias likewise sang it about his illness, desiring from God some relief for himself; and so does every upright man who sings it in his difficulties; and so did Christ when he sang it," O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 114.

instead of an anagogical clause, one finds a second historical interpretation, applying the Psalm to Ezechias lamenting his sickness. Thus, the system has two historical clauses, one applied to David and his time, the other to events in Jewish history after David's time (but before the period of the New Testament) such as Ezechias' illness, the Babylonian Captivity and the revolt of the Maccabees.

As Bright and Ramsay first showed,²⁶ this particular form of the fourfold system for interpreting the Psalms is attested in a Psalter commentary of Irish origin known as *The Old-Irish Treatise on the Psalter*, which formulates the rules for its use:

There are four things that are necessary for [understanding] the Psalms, that is, the first historical interpretation, and the second historical interpretation, the mystical meaning, and the moral meaning. The first historical interpretation [refers] to David and to Solomon and to the above-mentioned persons, to Saul, to Absalom, to the persecutors generally. The second historical interpretation [refers] to Ezechias, to the [Jewish] people, to the Maccabees. The mystical meaning [refers] to Christ, to the earthly and heavenly Church; the moral meaning to every holy person.²⁷

Why did the paraphrast choose a system which so obviously deviated from the conventional fourfold approach of Western biblical exegesis? He may well have found it explained (and applied) in an Irish commentary such as the one cited above. But mere availability of a source does not necessarily lead to its selection; there must have been some intrinsic advantage in the 'Irish' system over the conventional one that attracted him. The answer may lie in its fortuitous compatibility with his interpretative source for the Introductions, the Pseudo-Bede *Argumenta*, a work which may have been compiled in Ireland during the seventh century.²⁸ Typically, this work provides for each Psalm a set of two (sometimes three) discrete interpretations (*argumenta*), as in Ps 22:

26 "Notes on the 'Introductions' of the West-Saxon Psalms." In fact, the system was much more widely used by Irish exegetes than they suspected; see Martin McNamara, *The Psalms in the Early Irish Church* (Sheffield: 2000), 272–274.

27 My translation of the Irish text which was edited by Kuno Meyer, *Hibernica Minora, being a fragment of an Old-Irish treatise on the Psalter...*, Anecdota Oxoniensia, Medieval and Modern Series 8 (Oxford, 1894), 30–31.

28 See Bonifatius Fischer, "Beda de titulis psalmorum liber," in Johanne Autenrieth and Franz Brunhölzl (eds.), *Festschrift Bernhard Bischoff zu seinem 65. Geburtstag* (Stuttgart:

- (a) Reditum populi de Babylone praedicit, enumerans quantis redeuntes in itinere solatiis usi sunt Dei, quanta post reuersionem rerum ubertate donati.
- (b) Item, uox ecclesiae post baptismum; ad Hester.
- (c) Aliter, quia in xxi. psalmo habuimus tribulationem passionis, in xxii. laetitiam resurrectionis accepimus.²⁹

The first clause—the Argumentum (a)—normally contains a historical interpretation applying the Psalm to some prominent Old Testament figure; thus, for the first fifty psalms there are specific references to Ezechias (21x), David (11x), the Maccabees (3x), or (as in Ps 22) the Babylonian captives (9x). The second clause, the Argumentum (b), normally offers a mystical interpretation uttered by the Church (as above), Christ, the faithful, or the Apostles; the third, the Argumentum (c), which occurs only eleven times for the first fifty Psalms, is a mish-mash of comments from Jerome and Arnobius, the drift of which is primarily mystical (6x) (as above) or historical (4x).³⁰

At first glance, one could be excused for concluding that since most of the time the *Argumenta* had only two clauses, whereas the ‘Irish’ system demanded four, that they were hardly a good match. To complicate matters, the Arg (b), which might seem a good match for the paraphrast’s Christological clause, actually supplies the ‘right’ matter less than one third of the time. In effect, of the three parts of the *Argumenta*, the (c) one was virtually useless; the (b) was relevant only about a third of the time; and the Arg (a) offered just one historical interpretation. So the first challenge for the paraphrast was how to compensate for the limitations of the Pseudo-Bede *Argumenta* as the main source for his fourfold scheme of the Introductions.

The easier part of that challenge was the treatment of the moral and Christological clauses. Since the *Argumenta* offered so little suitable matter for

1971), 90–110, who plausibly argued at 107 that Bede would not have countenanced its radical historical interpretations, especially its rejection of messianic interpretations for Pss 2 and 8.

29 Text from *Liber Psalmorum: The West-Saxon Psalms, being the prose portion, or the ‘first fifty’, of the so-called Paris Psalter* (Boston and London: 1907), which contains a full text of the Pseudo-Bede *Argumenta* (hereafter abbreviated as ‘*The West-Saxon Psalms*’). I translate the text (p. 47 of their edition) as follows: (a) “He predicts the return of the [Jewish] people from Babylon, listing the number of comforts from God they enjoyed on the way as they returned, what wealth of things they were granted after the return; (b) likewise, the voice of the Church after baptism; to Hester; (c) Alternatively, since in Ps 21 we had the suffering of the Passion, in Ps 22 we received the joy of the resurrection.”

30 Pace Bright and Ramsay, who characterized the Argumentum (c) as moral; the one exception is the Arg (c) for Ps 33.

either, a simple solution was adopted: they were formulated on the model of the preceding Davidic clause, and appropriate but simple substitutions were made. Thus, the typical Davidic clause portrayed its subject as invoking God's help in his tribulations or against his enemies, so the moral and Christological clauses were made to copy that template. In place of specific tribulations or enemies (such as Saul and Absalom) endured by David, the moral clause broadly referred to the trials and tribulations of contemporary Christians. And in cases where David's problems were resolved in his favor, the moral clause correspondingly promised similar relief to its subject. For example, in Ps 9 the Davidic clause speaks of David thanking God for having delivered him from the oppression of Absalom and his allies; correspondingly, the moral clause has, "*and on þa ylcan gerad hine singð ælc rihtwis mann be his sylfes feondum.*"³¹ With this approach the paraphrast had no need of an immediate source for the moral interpretation; and in any case there was none available to him.

The situation with the Christological clause was slightly more complicated because only fifteen of the Pseudo-Bede *Argumenta* (b) contained suitable matter for such an interpretation. In many of these Christ is portrayed as speaking to God the Father about his sufferings at the hands of the Jews; typical is the Arg (b) for Ps 27, "*Christus de Iudaeis dicit ad Patrem.*"³² Since this formula neatly mirrored the Davidic clause, where David frequently addresses God the Father about the sufferings inflicted on him by his enemies, the paraphrast was able to take advantage of the parallel; consequently, he patterned all the Christological clauses on the Davidic. For example, in Ps 16, David's appeal to God to vindicate his innocence against his detractors and persecutors is reflected (rather cursorily) in the corresponding Christological clause, "*and swa dyde Crist be Iudeum,*"³³ even though a fuller expression, "*Christus dicit de Iudaeis ad Patrem,*" was available in the corresponding Arg (b). A more obvious example of ignoring the Arg (b) is that of Ps 41, "*ante baptismum uox Christi ad eos qui fidem sunt consecuturi,*"³⁴ which bears no resemblance to the corresponding Christological clause of the Introduction. The latter portrays Christ as wishing to be liberated from the Jews and their evils, on the ultimate model of the preceding Davidic clause where David desired to be freed from his exile. While individual Arg (b)s were not used to any significant

31 "And every just man in the same kind of situation sings the psalm about his own enemies," O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 107.

32 "Christ speaks to the Father about the Jews," Bright and Ramsay, *The West-Saxon Psalms*, 57.

33 "And likewise did Christ concerning the Jews," O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 115.

34 "Before baptism, the voice of Christ to those who will follow the faith," Bright and Ramsay, *The West-Saxon Psalms*, 97.

degree,³⁵ their references to Christ and the Jews nonetheless provided the basic model for the Christological clause.

The crucial challenge was the first and second historical interpretations; specifically, how to construct them from the Arg (a) source which offered only one historical interpretation. To achieve this, the paraphrast, following the guidelines of the Irish system, first began with the Davidic clause. If the Arg (a) had an expressly Davidic clause then there was no problem; he could take it as it was. Moreover, in such cases he dispensed with the second historical clause in his Introduction. For example, for Ps 11 the Arg (a) reads, “Ex persona Dauid canitur, quod in tempore eius omnis defecerit sanctus et deminutae sint ueritates a filiis hominum.”³⁶ The Introduction repeats this interpretation, “*ƿa Dafid ƿisne endleftan sealm sang, ƿa seofode he on ƿam sealm ƿæt on his dagum sceolde rihtwisnes and wisdom beon swa swiðe alegen*,”³⁷ thereby providing the first historical clause; but it contains no second historical clause.

On the other hand, if the Arg (a) contained a non-Davidic (but Old Testament) historical interpretation, as was predominantly the case (39 out of 50 occurrences) then the paraphrast took the idea of that clause and applied it to David. In such cases he invariably supplied a second historical clause, using the actual words of the source, the Arg (a). Take for example Ps 12, for which the Arg (a) supplied the following historical interpretation, “Ezechiae preces ab Assyriis obsessi.”³⁸ In spite of this exclusive focus on a post-Davidic event in its source, the Introduction begins with a Davidic clause, “*ƿa Dafid ƿysne twelftan sealm sang, ƿa seofode he to Drihtne on ƿam sealm be his feondum, ægƿer ge gastlicum ge lichamlicum*,”³⁹ which encapsulates the idea of the king’s besieging by enemies and his invoking of God’s help—just like Ezechias, the proper subject. A second historical clause, “*and swa dyde Ezechias se cyng be Assiriam*,

35 An exception may be Introd. 12, “and likewise did Christ [complain to God] about the Jews and the devils,” where the added reference to the latter may derive from the corresponding Arg (b), “uox Christi ad Patrem de diabolo dicit,” Bright and Ramsay, *The West-Saxon Psalms*, 23.

36 “[The psalm] is sung in the person of David, because in his time every sacred value had fallen off and truth had been weakened among the sons of men,” Bright and Ramsay, *The West-Saxon Psalms*, 21.

37 “When David sang this eleventh Psalm he lamented in that Psalm that in his days truth and wisdom were destined to be so severely diminished,” O’Neill, *King Alfred’s First Fifty Psalms*, 110.

38 “The prayers of Ezechias when he was besieged by the Assyrians,” Bright and Ramsay, *The West-Saxon Psalms*, 23.

39 “When David sang this twelfth Psalm he complained to the Lord in that psalm about his enemies, spiritual and corporeal,” O’Neill, *King Alfred’s First Fifty Psalms*, 111.

þa hi hine ymbseten hæfdon on þære byrig,"⁴⁰ is also supplied, and while showing subordination to the Davidic clause in its introductory "*and swa*," as well as its implied use of "*seofode*," nevertheless expresses accurately the content of the Arg (a).

Despite his almost total reliance on the Arg (a), which supplied mainly non-Davidic interpretations, the paraphrast favored the Davidic over the other historical (post-Davidic) interpretations. As evident from the above examples, no matter how the Arg (a) presented itself, a Davidic clause was always present in the Introductions. Equally evident is that the post-Davidic interpretation did not enjoy the same status; where it is absent in the Arg (a) no effort is made to construct one in the corresponding Introduction. Moreover, of the four (or three) interpretations the Davidic was the dominant one. Its privileged status is suggested in a number of ways. First, by its position at the head of the Introduction, which typically begins with the formula "*Dauid sang þisne X sealm...*"⁴¹ Secondly, by its contents, which are normally fuller and supplied with more contextual details than those of the other interpretations. These details are often taken from the Old Testament or the Psalm's biblical titulus; for example, the Introduction to Ps 35, describing how David "*genam his ceac and his spere on his getelde on niht to tacne þæt he inne mid him slæpendum wæs*,"⁴² contains information taken from 1Sm 26:7. Likewise, in Ps 50, the depiction of David, "*hreowsiende for ðam ærendum þe Nathan se witga him sæde*,"⁴³ comes from the corresponding biblical titulus; while the source of his remorse, that "*he hæfde gesyngod wið Ureus þone Cyðþiscan, þa he hine beswac for his wifes þingum, þære nama wæs Bersabe*"⁴⁴ is from 2 Sm 11.

Thirdly, the other interpretations are often modeled on the Davidic, not just by adding the connective "*and swa*" ("and likewise") but also by references to that clause. For example, the second historical interpretation for Ps 30, which

40 "And King Ezechias did likewise about the Assyrians when they had besieged him in the city," O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 107.

41 "David sang this X Psalm..." There are two exceptions (Pss 22 and 23), which may reflect the direct influence of Theodore's commentary; see O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 207 and 209, respectively.

42 "[David] took his [sc. Saul's] pitcher and his spear in his tent at night to indicate that he [sc. David] had been present within while he was sleeping," O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 141.

43 "Repenting because of the message which the prophet Nathan delivered to him," O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 163.

44 "He had sinned against Urias the Hittite when he deceived him on account of his wife, whose name was Bethsabee," O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 163.

was supplied by the Arg (a) and refers to the Babylonian captives, contains the clause, “*he witgode þæt hi sceoldon gebiddan on þa ylcan wisan þe he dyde, and hyra ungelimp þær seofian swa he dyde*,”⁴⁵ where the phrases, *on þa ylcan wisan* (“in the same manner”) and *swa he dyde* (“as he did”), refer the reader back to the preceding Davidic interpretation. Sometimes the use of the Davidic interpretation as a model is indicated by verbal echoing; for example, in Ps 11, the phrase “*on his dagum*” (“in his days”) of the moral clause echoes the same phrase of the Davidic clause; and in Ps 41, the phrase “*he wilnode*” (“he desired”) in the Christological interpretation repeats “*he wilnode*” of the Davidic. Fourthly, the paraphrast occasionally creates overt links between the Davidic interpretation and the paraphrase proper. Sometimes this is done by means of verbal repetition; e.g. in Ps 48, phrases of the Davidic clause, “*þæt hy ongeaton þæt hi ne mih-ton þa welan mid him lædan*,”⁴⁶ are repeated in the paraphrases of vv. 18 and 7, “*he...ne læt þæt eall mid him*” (“he will not carry all that with him”) and “*Ongitan*” (“let them understand”), respectively. In other cases the opening words of the paraphrase proper are preceded by an explicit identification of the speaker, who is always David. Thus, Ps 3, “*He seofode to Drihtne*”; and Pss 8, 28, 50, “*He cwæð*.”⁴⁷

Thus far the evidence clearly points to the privileging of the Davidic clause over the others. Yet despite this subordination, the other clauses maintain their integrity; each stands as an independent interpretation with its proper subject. So it seems—at least for Introductions 2–19. However, beginning with Ps 20 a subtle shift occurs whereby David becomes the subject not only of his particular clause but also of the others. This is effected by portraying him as prophesying or admonishing the subjects of the other interpretations, thereby relegating them to subordinate roles. Take, for example, Ps 29:

- 1° *David sang pysne nigan and twentigopan sealm þam Gode þe hine alysyde æt his feondum and æt eallum earfoðum;*
 2° *and þæt ylce he witegode be Ezechie: þæt he sceolde þæt ylce don þonne he alysed wære æt Assirium and æt his metrumnesse;*

45 “He [sc. David] prophesied that they were destined to beseech in the same manner in which he did and to bewail their misfortune(s) there, as he did,” O’Neill, *King Alfred’s First Fifty Psalms*, 133.

46 “That they recognize that they would not be able to carry that wealth with them,” O’Neill, *King Alfred’s First Fifty Psalms*, 159.

47 “He lamented to the Lord” and “He said,” respectively; O’Neill, *King Alfred’s First Fifty Psalms*, 101, 106, 131, and 163.

4° and *þæt ylce he witgode be ælcum rihtwison men þe þysne sealm singð*
oppe for hine sylfne oppe for oðerne, Gode to þancunge þære blisse þe he
þonne hæfð;

3° and *eac he witegode on þam sealme be Criste, hu he sceolde alysed beon,*
*ægðer ge fram Iudeum ge of ðy deaðe.*⁴⁸

Here the formulation of the Davidic clause is no different from the preceding ones, "*Dauid sang...*" etc. But for the remaining three clauses, the earlier "*and swa*" formula which serves to link them (rather mechanically) with the Davidic clause while maintaining their interpretative independence, is replaced by "*þæt ylce*" or "*eac*," which serves to bind the clause more closely to the Davidic. Most significantly, David is now the subject who prophesied ("*he witgode*") the interpretation of the clause. This shift of emphasis does not come out of the blue; it is already nascent in Introd. 8, where in the second clause David is presented as prophesying the Incarnation of Christ: "*and eac he witgode on ðam sealme be þære wuldorlican acennednesse Cristes.*"⁴⁹ A further stage is marked by Introd. 20 where David is presented not only as the subject of his own (the first) clause but also as prophesier of the second historical and Christological clauses.⁵⁰ In Introd. 21 David controls only his own proper clause; in Introd. 22 (and 25) he prophesies his own clause and the second historical; the other two clauses remain independent of his agency.⁵¹ But in Introd. 23 David is given for the first time all (three) clauses. There is further vacillation in Introd. 25 where only the two historical clauses have a Davidic subject-speaker; Introd. 26, where it is three of the four clauses, and Introd. 27 where all three subordinate clauses are independent of David's agency. But from Introd. 28 to the end the pattern of David as in command of all the clauses as agent or speaker is more or less set.⁵² Its effect is to make the Psalms wholly and exclusively Davidic,

48 "1° David sang this twenty-ninth Psalm to the God who freed him from his enemies and from all difficulties; 2° and he prophesied that same about Ezechias; that he was destined to do the same when he was delivered from the Assyrians and his illness; 4° and he prophesied the same about every upright man who sings this Psalm, either for himself or for another person, thanking God for the happiness which he then enjoys; 3° and also he [*sc.* David] prophesied in that Psalm about Christ, how He was destined to be delivered both from the Jews and from death," O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 132.

49 "And he also prophesied in that Psalm about the glorious incarnation of Christ," O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 106.

50 But not the moral clause.

51 I rely on the Vitellius copy (London, BL, Cotton Vitellius E. xviii) of the Introductions for Intros. 21 and 26 which are missing in the Paris Psalter.

52 With a few exceptions: Intros. 35 and 36 have the earlier pattern; Intros. 39.3° and 42.3° are independent of David.

presenting them as the compositions of David speaking literally and contemporaneously of his own situation and at the same time prophetically not only of later Jewish history, but also of Christ and of contemporary medieval Christians.

In theory most early medieval commentators acknowledged the crucial role played by David in the composition of the Psalter, but in practice they conceded multiple authorship for the work, guided by the biblical *titulus* (heading) to each Psalm which sometimes indicates an author other than David. For example, Ps 41, “IN FINEM INTELLECTUS FILII CHORI” (“To the end, understanding for the sons of Core”; likewise, Pss 43–48) or Ps 49, “PSALMUS ASAPH” (“A Psalm for Asaph”). Even when they did attribute the literal meaning of a particular Psalm to David, the commentators would move on to what was for them the more important issue, the various levels of allegorical interpretation. So the paraphrast’s exclusive designation of David as author of all the Psalms (the first fifty) is remarkable, made all the more so by the appropriation to David in the second half of the Introductions of the role of foretelling (and uttering) the other three interpretations. In effect, David becomes the sole author and even voice of the Psalms, a role for which nothing comparable is found among the Latin commentators. Even the Irish commentaries, which demonstrate a strongly Davidic bias, did not confer on him this exclusive authorship.⁵³

To find anything comparable one has to go back to Theodore of Mopsuestia. What set his work apart was its insistence that David was the author of all of the Psalms. Well aware that many of the Psalms refer to events after the time of David, he circumvented the problem by making him prophetically assume the persona of different Old Testament characters such as Ezechias or the Jews in exile or the Maccabees; he could thus put himself in their situation and show them the model to follow by means of his Psalms.⁵⁴ Take, for example, Theodore’s interpretation of Ps 41 (as it has survived in the Latin translation of Julian of Eclanum), “Ea quae erat populus Iudaeorum in babylonia captiuitate passurus beatus Dauid praeuidens et praedicens, ex persona ipsius populi praesens carmen instituit, talem orationem formans quae tempore illi captiuisque conueniat,”⁵⁵ where David foresees and forecasts everything that would happen to the Jews in the Babylonian Captivity. Compare Introduction

53 McNamara, *The Psalms*, 285–286.

54 Robert Devreesse, *Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste*, Studi e testi 141 (Vatican City, 1944), esp. 70–73.

55 De Coninck, *Theodori Mopsuesteni*, 191, lines 3–6; “Foreseeing and foretelling those things which the Jewish people would suffer in the Babylonian Captivity, blessed David composed the present song in the persona of that same people, shaping a prayer such as would suit that period and those captives.”

41 (second historical clause) of the *Prose Psalms*, “*and þæt ilce he [sc. David] witgode be Israela folce gehæftum on Babilonia, þæt hy sceoldon þæt ylce don.*”⁵⁶ This interpretation accords in content with the paraphrast’s normal source, the Arg (a) which reads, “*Populus in Babylone captivus patriae memorat,*”⁵⁷ but significantly there is no mention here of a prophetic role for David. The idea of giving David this exclusive role as prophet of future events in the history of Israel (ending with the Maccabees) may well have derived from Theodore.⁵⁸

It is not readily obvious why the paraphrast changed his mode of interpretation halfway through the Introductions. His unorthodox approach may reflect a growing conviction as he progressed through the Psalms that they should be treated as the work of David *in toto*, a conviction that would have been strengthened by Theodore’s exegesis. In any case, treating each Psalm as a unified, Davidic, composition simplified the issue of interpretation. One has only to look at contemporary Western Psalter commentaries to see what kinds of problems were sidestepped by adopting this strategy. For example, an especially egregious problem was that of multiple interpretations, whereby the commentator would divide a Psalm into several discrete parts, now emphasizing a historical interpretation, now an allegorical or moral, depending on the received suitability of a particular section. The paraphrast’s *modus operandi* of imparting a single interpretation to each Psalm avoided such fragmentation; however, it posed a new set of problems at the architectonic level which required a solution.

In my edition of the *Prose Psalms* I argued that the paraphrast would have been facilitated in his structural overview of each Psalm by its clear division in the Latin Psalter as a sequence of verses.⁵⁹ However, that structure, useful though it was, had limited value as an organizing principle. The division into verses brought its own problems because of the strong tendency towards asyndetic parataxis in the Latin Psalter where clauses and even verses often have no obvious connection with each other. To overcome this difficulty and produce a syntactically smooth translation, the paraphrast employed a number of

56 “And he prophesied the same thing about the people of Israel held captive in Babylon, that they were destined to do the same [sc. desire return from exile],” O’Neill, *King Alfred’s First Fifty Psalms*, 150.

57 “The people held captive in Babylon remember their fatherland.” I have emended “*memororat*” of Bright and Ramsay, *The West-Saxon Psalms*, 97, to “*memorat*.”

58 Devresse, *Essai sur Théodore*, 73, “il a maintenu...que l’horizon historique de David ne dépassait pas la dernière époque du peuple de Dieu, c’est-à-dire la période machabéenne.”

59 O’Neill, *King Alfred’s First Fifty Psalms*, 45.

syntactical ‘bridging’ devices. He added connectives such as *and* and *ne*, as well as temporal markers such as *þa* and *þonne*. To achieve a level of hypotaxis, he established logical relationships between verses, usually causative (*for þam*) and adversative (*ac*); in especially difficult cases he supplied explanatory phrases such as, “*Ac hit nis na swa hy cweðað*” and “*Gif þu þus dest*.”⁶⁰

Even still, he faced another, more disconcerting, problem in the Latin Psalms, the sudden switches of subject and person. For example in Ps 21, the first group of verses (2–26) refer to the psalmist speaking in the first person of his tribulations; it is followed immediately and abruptly, by a different subject described in the third person plural (vv. 27 ff.). In other instances where a Psalm’s contents would seem to suggest several speakers, it might not be clear who a particular speaker was or even at what point his speech ended. The paraphrast found a convenient solution to this problem in Cassiodorus who formally addressed these structural issues. At the beginning of his commentary on each Psalm he had supplied a short section called the “*Divisio Psalmi*,” an analysis of the structure of that Psalm, identifying how many sections or divisions it has. (A section is usually so identified on the basis that it is spoken by a particular person or deals with a distinct topic; for example, Cassiodorus in his *Expositio Psalmorum* for Ps 17 began by declaring that it could not possibly suit a single speaker, that there were actually four consecutive speakers, the prophet (David), the Church, Christ, and again the Church.)⁶¹ The number of sections obviously varies with the length (number of verses) and complexity of a Psalm, but the typical range is two to four. Having identified the sections of a Psalm in the *Divisio Psalmi*, Cassiodorus then draws attention in the commentary proper to the precise point (normally the beginning of a verse) where a new section begins.

How Cassiodorus’ approach would have helped the paraphrast at the level beyond the individual verse can be seen in Ps 14. According to Cassiodorus, it has two divisions, a question and an answer. The question (he says) occupies only the first verse (v. 1), and is posed by the prophet;⁶² the answer comprises the rest of the Psalm (vv. 2–5) and is given by Christ.⁶³ Compare *Prose Psalms*,

60 “But it is not at all as they say” (Ps 3:4) and “If you act in this manner (Ps 44:13),” O’Neill, *King Alfred’s First Fifty Psalms*, 101 and 155, respectively.

61 *Magni Aurelii Cassiodori Expositio Psalmorum I–LXX*, ed. M. Adriaen, CCSL 97 (Turnhout, 1958), 151, lines 19–29.

62 “Desiderans propheta nosse...responsa petit” (“The prophet [David] wishing to learn... seeks answers”), Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum*, 132, lines 24–27.

63 “Venit ad secundam partem...ex persona Domini Christi dicitur” (“He comes to the second part...it is spoken in the person of Christ”), Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum*, 133, lines 52–54.

which, after posing the question of the opening verse, inserts before the translation of v. 2 the clause, "*Pa andswarode Drihten þæs witgan mode...and cwæð se witga.*"⁶⁴ In other words, although David uttered the physical words of the response, in reality he was acting as a mere mouthpiece; his words came from God "*þurh onbryrðnesse þæs Halgan gastes.*"⁶⁵ The addition of this clause, which was evidently prompted by Cassiodorus's analysis, allowed the paraphrast to organize the structure of the Psalm in a question-and-answer format and to establish the identities of the two speakers.

In Ps 44, Cassiodorus identified two major divisions, the first about Christ (*Sponsus*, "the bridegroom"), the second about the Church (*Sponsa*, "the bride"). But before commenting on the first division he notes that the first verse, "ERUCTAVIT COR MEUM VERBUM BONUM; DICO OPERA MEA REGI" (v. 2) ("My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the king"), although uttered by the prophet [sc. David], actually represents the words of God,⁶⁶ and consequently that it constitutes the prologue (*proemio*) to the Psalm rather than part of the first section. As though taking his cue from Cassiodorus, the paraphrast addresses the same issue by interposing between the Introduction and his translation of the first verse the following comment, "*Sona on þam forman ferse se Fæder spræc þurh Dauid be Cristes acennesse and cwæð...*"⁶⁷ Cassiodorus locates the beginning of the second division at v. 13 with the comment that just as the previous division described the might of the Bridegroom, so in this one the reflective glory of the Bride from her association with Christ is announced.⁶⁸ Compare *Prose Psalms* 44:13, where the first clause, "*And swa ylce doð eac (þa dohtor...etc.)*,"⁶⁹ is an authorial addition which serves to connect *dohtor* ("FILIAE," the opening word of v. 13) with the exhortation to honor Christ in the previous verse ("ADORABUNT EUM"; "they shall adore him"). Evidently, the paraphrast followed Cassiodorus closely not only in interpretation but also in structure.

64 "Then the Lord responded to the mind of the prophet...and the prophet said," O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 113.

65 "By means of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit"; O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 113.

66 "diuinitatis iussa diuulgat" ("he makes widely known the divine commands"), Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum*, 404, line 66.

67 "Immediately after in the first verse the Father spoke through David about Christ's incarnation and said..." O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 154.

68 "Venit ad secundum modum...et sicut ibi potentia Sponsi describitur, ita et hic gloria Sponsae de Christi honore declaratur" ("He comes to the second approach...and just as there [sc. the first part] the power of the Bridegroom is described, so here the glory of the Bride derived from the honor of Christ is announced"), Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum*, 411, lines 372–377.

69 "And those daughters also do likewise"; the words in round brackets are supplied for context.

Towards a Reconstruction of the Paraphrast's Sources

A reader of the section on “the Sources” in my recent edition of the *Prose Psalms* could well be excused for thinking that the paraphrast had a fairly impressive library of Psalter texts and commentaries (Patristic and Irish) at his disposal. However, it is one thing to claim that a particular commentary influenced the *Prose Psalms*, and quite another to conclude that a copy of that work was available to the paraphrast. His wrestling in the Introductions—not always successfully—with the limitations of the Pseudo-Bede *Argumenta* as a source for his fourfold scheme hints at an author making virtue of necessity (a paucity of sources). In any case, rather than assume that evidence for his use of a particular source implies direct access to a copy of that work, it may be more realistic to adopt a minimalist approach. First and foremost he would certainly have had a copy of the *Romanum Psalter*, the version which was used in England during the ninth century for both public liturgy and private devotion. He likely had access to a copy of the *Gallicanum*, Jerome's edition of the Psalter translated from the Septuagint (c. 390) and possibly also the *Hebraicum*, Jerome's final version of the Psalms, translated from the Hebrew original.

For the Old English Introductions, the primary and essential source was the Pseudo-Bede *Argumenta*, a fact which makes that work a verifiable source. Certain Introductions also betray the distinctive influence of Theodore of Mopsuestia's literal and historical exegesis (as transmitted in a Latin translation made by Julian of Eclanum and an epitome of the latter) not only in individual cases of interpretation but more importantly in the special emphasis on the Davidic interpretation which becomes progressively important in the Introductions. Likewise, in the paraphrase proper, the general bias towards literal and historical explanations, as well as a considerable number of close parallels in content and even phrasing with Theodore/Julian, reflects the influence of the Antiochene school of exegesis. However, since neither Julian's translation nor its epitome has survived in a full version, the exact measure of dependence on each cannot be determined.

Allegorical interpretations of the kind that dominated early medieval biblical exegesis in the West are also present in the *Prose Psalms*, though their influence is circumscribed. Of these, Cassiodorus was the most heavily used. Indeed, the dependence is so pervasive and in some cases so striking that it is tempting to conclude that the paraphrast had a full copy of the *Expositio Psalmorum*. Other post-Patristic commentaries of the allegorical school may well have influenced the *Prose Psalms*, notably the Ps-Jerome *Breviarium in Psalmos* and the *Glosa Psalmorum ex traditione seniorum*. Since the first of these latter works depends heavily on the second, and both in turn are indebted

to Augustine and Cassiodorus, it is not always possible to ascertain which is the specific source.

Any mention together of Theodore/Julian and the pseudo-Bede *Argumenta* inevitably raises the question of Hiberno-Latin influence since both of these works were mediated through, and, in the case of the second, possibly composed in, Irish schools of exegesis. But the litmus test for direct Irish influence is the use in the Introductions of a fourfold scheme with two historical interpretations which was developed in the Irish schools.⁷⁰ At least two Irish Psalter commentaries of the eight- and early-ninth century actually provide a theoretical formulation of the scheme which seems to have been the format in which the paraphrast received it—judging by the methodical way in which he applied it. Overall, this group of proposed sources is modest to the point that one could envisage all of them occurring together in a single source,⁷¹ a glossed Psalter of Irish origin. That putative Psalter would have had as its primary text a copy of the *Gallicanum*. It would have contained the Pseudo-Bede *Argumenta*, entered in the margins close to the beginning of its corresponding Psalm, as well as scholia and glosses from Julian of Eclanum's translation (and its epitome) of Theodore's Greek commentary. At the beginning of Ps 1, it would have had the formulation of the Irish fourfold system. And there would have been numerous glosses of allegorical bias on particular words spread throughout the text of the Psalms.

By way of a hypothetical model, consider the so-called Southampton Psalter, a decorated copy of the *Gallicanum* produced in Ireland at the turn of the eleventh century.⁷² It has a full copy of the Pseudo-Bede *Argumenta* entered on the margin close to the beginning of the corresponding Psalm in the main text. It has a large body of glosses, some of them literal/historical (from Julian's commentary), but most allegorical, based on a commentary which was probably compiled about the middle of the ninth century from the *Glosa Psalmorum ex traditione seniorum* and Cassiodorus. Moreover, the Southampton Psalter has the structural divisions for each Psalm mandated by Cassiodorus, in the form of Roman numerals entered adjacent to the relevant verse.⁷³ The only thing missing is the theoretical formulation of the Irish fourfold system, but the

70 See McNamara, *The Psalms*, 288.

71 With the obvious exception of a copy of the *Romanum* Psalter.

72 Ed. P. P. Ó Néill, *Psalterium Suthantoniense*, CCCM 240 (Turnhout: 2012).

73 Another hypothetical model is the Double Psalter of St. Ouen (Rouen, Bibliothèque municipale, 24 [A. 41]), written in the tenth century, but like the Southampton Psalter containing commentary matter that dates from centuries before.

latter's attested presence in two Irish Psalter commentaries makes it likely that it enjoyed circulation in other commentaries of the same type.

Conclusions

How the paraphrast used these sources sheds much light on his method of translation and ultimately his agenda. On the whole he stayed close to his primary source, the *Romanum* Psalter, when it made good sense. He projected its literal meaning well, even as he colored it with interpretative perspectives mainly reflecting the historical interpretations laid down in the Introductions. When confronted by difficulties (mostly syntactical and semantic) in the Latin text, he adopted a variety of solutions, sometimes supplying verbal connectors of his own making, sometimes providing interpretations from the commentaries. One could characterize his approach as pragmatic—whatever (re)source best clarified the literal sense was clearly the one used, even if that meant compromising interpretative consistency.

His decision to provide an Introduction for each Psalm, normally containing four (or three) interpretations, has to be seen as highly suggestive of an agenda. This appendage was presumably prompted by a source containing both a formulation of the Irish system of four interpretations and the Pseudo-Bede *Argumenta*, which provided interpretative content for that system. The Introduction would have served several purposes: pedagogical, instructional (in a moral sense), and devotional. The first of these is latent in the two historical interpretations, which were meant to establish the Psalms as a historical text, a record of Old Testament events that actually happened (*historia*)—just as if one were reading, say, the Book of Maccabees to learn about later Jewish history. Nor should the somewhat cryptic references to events in the two historical interpretations be regarded as problematic for the intended audience. They could act as cues for expanding on the narratives of David's (and Ezechias') life as related in the Book of Kings or Paralipomenon (Chronicles) and thus serve an educational purpose. Indeed, a glimpse of how the paraphrast envisaged such expansions can be seen in the excursus on Achaz in Intro. 45 (Interpretation 2°).

The devotional aspect of the Psalms is expressed in the Christological clause of the Introductions. At first glance this disposition might seem odd, since in strictly exegetical terms the Christological interpretation was meant to be mystical—the Psalm foretelling future events in the life of Christ and the Church. But as expressed by the paraphrast it becomes much more personal: the Psalm is presented as the voice of Christ lamenting his sufferings at the

hands of the Jews. Most likely the paraphrast took the personal tone for this interpretation from his source, the *Argumenta* (b), which typically uses the formula, "uox Christi." Yet a collation of the Introductions with their corresponding *Argumenta* (b) shows that the paraphrast, although clearly dependent on the latter, actually ignored that source more than half the time (35/50), notably when it referred to persons (e.g. the Apostles) or agents (e.g. the Church) other than Christ.⁷⁴ Instead, he portrayed Christ as the exclusive subject of that interpretation.⁷⁵ Moreover, in doing so, he narrowly focused on the theme of Christ's sufferings even though it was present in less than a quarter of the *Argumenta* (b). The most plausible explanation for this manipulation of his source is a devotional intent. The references to Christ's sufferings provided a salutary reminder for Christians of their debt to the Savior while at the same time reinforcing the message of the 'moral' clause, by portraying the incarnate Christ as a model for Christians undergoing similar experiences at the hands of human and/or supernatural enemies.

An instructional agenda can be detected in the moral clause which should be seen as a conscious attempt to make the Psalms directly relevant to contemporary Christians. Thus, it invariably couches its interpretation in contemporary terms by means of verbs in the present tense (*singð*, *deð*) and temporal adverbs such as *nu*, while envisaging Christians of the paraphrast's own time as singing/reciting the individual Psalm. But what is most significant about his treatment of the moral interpretation is the privileging of it over the Christological clause, reflected in its location before the latter. This sequence represented a direct violation not only of biblical chronology

74 For example, the Arg (b) for Ps 33, "uox fidei per ieunium" ("the voice of faith through fasting," Bright and Ramsay, *The West-Saxon Psalms*, 72), bears no relation to the corresponding interpretation of Introd. 33, "and þæt ylce he witgode be Criste þæt he þæt ylce don wolde, and eac oðre læran" ("and he prophesied that same thing about Christ, that He would desire to do the same thing and also teach others"), O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 138. Even when the Arg (b) was Christological, its matter was re-cast to conform to the verbal pattern laid down in the others clauses of the Introduction. For example, the Arg (b) for Ps 41, which reads "ante baptismum uox Christi ad eos qui fidem sunt consecuturi" ("before baptism the voice of Christ to those who will follow the faith," Bright and Ramsay, *The West-Saxon Psalms*, 97) is rendered by the formulaic "and eac be Criste and be Iudeum he witgode: hu he wilnode þæt he wurde gedæled wið hy and wið heora yfelnesse" ("and also he prophesied about Christ and about the Jews: how He desired that He would be separated from them and their malice," O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 150).

75 The exception is Introd. 50, where St Paul is the subject (as in the corresponding Arg (b)), no doubt because its sentiments of repentance for past sins would have been deemed inappropriate coming from the mouth of Christ.

(which the paraphrast otherwise follows) but more importantly of the Irish fourfold system that provided his model, in which the Christological came before the moral interpretation, no doubt to reflect the proper hierarchy of Salvation History. Of the forty-six Introductions that contain both clauses (the combination is lacking in Intros. 1, 8, 18, and 44), all but two have the moral clause preceding the Christological. Other indications that the paraphrast regarded the moral interpretation as more important are its much fuller formulation and the fact that it often provides the verbal model for the Christological. For example, in Introd. 17, the moral interpretation, “*and swa ded ælc þæra þe hine singð, þancað Gode his mundbyrde, þonne he hine of hwylcum earfoðum alysed hæfð, oþþe hine oððe þæne þe he hine fore singð*,” is followed by a Christological clause, “*for þæm ylcan hine sang Crist, þonne he alysed wæs fram Iudea ehtnesse*,” in clear phraseological subordination.⁷⁶

If one accepts that of the four interpretations the Davidic and the moral clauses (in that order) were accorded priority, what are the implications? The dominance of the Davidic clause over all the others implies not only a desire to stay close to the literal meaning of the Psalms but also to treat them first and foremost as historical and autobiographical records of King David's life. While it is tempting to see the paraphrast as heavily influenced in that regard by the commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia (in Julian of Eclanum's translation), he can hardly have genuinely understood that work's approach and the bold theory of exegesis underlying it. He took from Theodore whatever suited his much simpler purpose of making David the *fons et origo* of the Psalms, though whether he was so motivated because of some special personal identification with King David is difficult to prove. The special importance accorded to the moral interpretation is best understood as reflecting a special desire to make the Psalms relevant to the contemporary Christian, referred to sweepingly as “*ælc rihtwis man*.” And its consistent theme of release from all present tribulations—rather than temptations or vices, as one finds for this

76 “And likewise does each of those who sings it, he thanks God for protecting him, whenever He has released him from such tribulations—either him or that one for whom he sings it; and Christ sang it on account of that same thing, whenever He was released from the persecution of the Jews.” Likewise, in Introd. 42, the moral interpretation, “*and be ælcum Cristnum menn þe þysne sealm singð, he witgode þæt hy hine sceoldan be þam ylcan singan*” (“and he [sc. David] prophesied about every Christian man who sings this Psalm, that they were destined to sing it about that same subject”), is followed by a cryptic Christological clause, “*and eac Crist be Iudeum*” (“and also [he prophesied that] Christ [was destined to sing this Psalm] about the Jews”), O'Neill, *King Alfred's First Fifty Psalms*, 116 and 152.

interpretation in commentaries of monastic provenance—suggests that the intended audience was secular, rather than ecclesiastical or monastic.

The paraphrast's approach to translating the Psalms can be broadly characterized as pragmatic both in its modes of interpretation and in its use of commentary sources. On one level the pragmatism is evident in his manipulation of the two (or three) interpretations of the Pseudo-Bede *Argumenta* to accommodate them to the requirements of a fourfold scheme in the Introductions (as discussed above). This practical bias is no less evident in the matter from the *Argumenta* which he chose to omit: the (c) section (where it was present) and the obscure directions found as a constituent part of many of the Arg (b), such as "lege ad Genesim perditio Sodomaē" ("Read in the Book of Genesis the destruction of Sodom," Arg 10) and "lege ad Lucam" ("Read in the Gospel of Luke," Arg 11). Presumably, he regarded these as a distraction, an impediment to a straightforward allegorical interpretation. In Ps 44, the paraphrast was confronted with the difficulty of accommodating his policy of literal paraphrase with the obvious call to allegory inherent in the Latin text, a call reinforced by an overwhelming body of Western commentary. As argued above,⁷⁷ he neatly reconciled the two demands by providing both literal and allegorical interpretations, side by side.

It is not difficult to see how such modifications, however practical, could easily lead to idiosyncrasy. Put simply, there is nothing quite like the *Prose Psalms* in its handling of sources, compared with earlier and contemporary (Carolingian and Hiberno-Latin) commentaries—even when due allowance is made for intellectual and linguistic differences. One manifestation of this idiosyncratic tendency in the paraphrase proper is the mingling of sources, historical and allegorical; while certainly not whimsical it is nonetheless unpredictable and odd, so that, for example, side by side with a Theodorean interpretation one finds an influence from Cassiodorus. This eclecticism, which insouciantly blends the allegorical interpretations of the Alexandrian school with the literal/historical of the Antiochene, seems to have been dictated by the immediate interpretative demands of the passage being translated.

In the Introductions the application to David of those Arg (a) that contained non-Davidic interpretations—while maintaining the original Arg (a) as the second historical interpretation—is quite unique. It matches neither Theodore's treatment (a single, Davidic, interpretation) nor that of the Irish commentaries which, when applying a fourfold scheme, used discrete situations and personae for the first and second historical interpretations. In order to bring this off, the paraphrast had to reconcile the first and second historical interpretations by emphasizing what they had in common and thus

⁷⁷ See 262–263, above.

sacrificing, or at least diluting, the specific historical situation indicated by the source. No less peculiar is that while imitating Theodore's historical focus on David and on his prophetic role in subsequent Old Testament events, the paraphrast also granted him a similar role for the New Testament, in effect making the Davidic interpretation and persona dominate all four interpretations of the Introduction. These substantive modifications convey the impression of a rather naïve approach to Psalter exegesis, in which commentaries are used without any real understanding of the exegetical principles underlying them. At its best, idiosyncrasy can be the mark of brilliance or even genius but hardly so in the present instance.

On a more positive note the pervasiveness of these manifestations of pragmatism and idiosyncrasy throughout the *Prose Psalms* argues strongly for the integrity of the work and a single authorial voice. From these characteristics certain tentative inferences can also be drawn about that author and his intentions. The pragmatism which allowed him to provide a reasonably literal paraphrase of the Psalms, a working translation, while at the same time emphasizing their relevance to contemporary Christians (in the supererogatory Introductions) surely points to an agenda (pedagogical, morally instructional and devotional) and an audience. That audience is likely to have been contemporary West-Saxon Christians who, while reading about the historical vicissitudes of King David (and other royals) through the medium of the *Prose Psalms*, would also be guided to see the relevance of these events to their own lives. At the same time the paraphrast's exegetical idiosyncrasies imply that he was not a biblical scholar but rather an 'outsider', someone who did not belong to the learned ecclesiastical circles where the conventional allegorical approach was *de rigueur*. One could envisage a clerical scholar with a lay audience in mind adopting a pragmatic approach to the Psalms for didactic purposes, but when to this is added a highly idiosyncratic (and unorthodox) approach to Psalter exegesis the combination is much harder to reconcile in the person of a single ecclesiastic. In sum, the internal evidence of the *Prose Psalms*' agenda (and the strategy of translation devised to effect it) points to a secular author—no doubt assisted by clerical exegetes—composing for a lay audience. This remarkable set of compositional circumstances has an equally remarkable correspondence in the reign of King Alfred of Wessex, a ruler known for his devotion to the Psalms,⁷⁸ his reliance on ecclesiastical advisors and his declared agenda of instruction for his people.

78 Emphasized by Asser in his life of the king; see William Henry Stevenson (ed.), *Asser's Life of King Alfred* (Oxford, 1959, with a new introduction by Dorothy Whitelock) 59 (§76); translated by K&L 65–110 at 91.

The Laws of Alfred and Ine

Mary P. Richards

King Alfred's "mighty code," including the laws of King Ine of Wessex, is a monument of English law, influential through the Anglo-Saxon period and into the Norman era.¹ Composed late in Alfred's career, the code was produced c.895 following his great military victories as yet another means to unify and stabilize *Angelcynn*.² While assembling laws selected from those of his predecessors together with Ine's legal statements and some of his own devising, Alfred drew inspiration from Mosaic law, continental Germanic ideas, and his Christian vision of a just society. Alfred's code, then, was traditional, shaped by the style and concerns of earlier codes, yet visionary in its legislation for the English people. He privileged the West Saxon contributions of Ine, yet incorporated materials from Kent and Mercia that embodied the received law of those kingdoms. Alfred's *domboc*, as it soon came to be known, was not only more comprehensive than earlier codes, but it also served as a widely-recognized touchstone for future royal legislation.

Although royal codes were issued in the names of kings from Æthelbert of Kent (early seventh century) through Cnut (early eleventh century), Alfred's laws are paradigmatic for the study of Anglo-Saxon legislation. The codes normally begin with a preface stating the name of the king, where and when he issued the laws, and what process lay behind them. The laws themselves follow one after another, covering all manner of societal concerns including theft, physical violence, homicide, respect for the king and his property, respect for the church and its property, marriage, and the obligations and worth of the various ranks of society. The most prominent stylistic feature is the *Gif* clause stating the crime, followed by the appropriate punishment: a fine, banishment, scourging, mutilation, or death. There are provisions for the accused to bring forth oath helpers to vouch for him and pledge surety, or he may undergo an

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- 1 This chapter is dedicated to the memory of Patrick Wormald who, I believe, coined the descriptor of Alfred's law code and, more importantly, revolutionized the study of Anglo-Saxon law. I owe thanks as well to Dr. Richard J.E. Dammary, who generously provided access to his doctoral thesis.
 - 2 Alfred's biographer Asser, writing in 893, does not mention the laws, hence the assumption that they are of a slightly later date. See also the discussion of *Angelcynn* in Mary P. Richards, "Anglo-Saxonism in the Old English Laws," *Anglo-Saxonism and the Construction of Social Identity*, eds. Allen J. Frantzen and John D. Niles (Gainesville, FL: 1997), 40–59, at 48–49.

ordeal to verify his guilt or innocence. The reader is urged to consult the text of *Alfred-Ine* and to read the secondary literature, especially the work of Patrick Wormald, to gain a deeper understanding of Anglo-Saxon legislation.

To address the laws of Alfred and Ine, four topics are critical to understanding their significance. "Manuscripts and Contexts" conveys how the physical setting of the codes reveals their meaning in the collections where they appear. "Format as Symbol" considers the traditional presentation of *Alfred-Ine* and its symbolic value. "Preliminary Materials: Chapters and Preface" analyzes the origin and development of these integral parts of the text. Finally, "Texts and Contexts" discusses the sources of Alfred and Ine and the relationship between their law codes.

I Manuscripts and Contexts

One objective measure of the reputation and impact of *Alfred-Ine* lies in its manuscript tradition.³ Not only does the text itself survive in multiple copies dating from the mid-tenth through the early twelfth century, a greater number than any other Anglo-Saxon law code, but the format persists as well, conveying a sense that the two West-Saxon codes were recognized as a unit and preserved as such. Furthermore, the manuscript treatments suggest that Alfred's code with Ine's appendix survives basically as it was first recorded. As Wormald points out, each copy "either opens with a list of 120 chapter rubrics, or uses these [numbered] rubrics throughout the text."⁴ Preceded by Alfred's lengthy prologue, Chapter 1 (so marked in the manuscripts) covers the Golden Rule and is followed by forty-three laws.⁵ Next comes Ine's prologue as Chapter 44,

3 Patrick Wormald's treatment of the manuscripts in *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century*, vol. 1: *Legislation and its Limits* (Oxford: 1999), Chapter 4, 162–263, provides the most thorough recent analysis of these materials. Wormald builds upon and corrects the work of Felix Liebermann, whose *Die Gesetzen der Angelsachsen*, 3 vols. (Halle: 1903–16), is the *sine qua non* for the texts of the Old English laws. Richard J.E. Dammery's doctoral thesis, "The Law Code of Alfred the Great," 2 vols. (Cambridge: 1990), presents a thorough discussion of the manuscripts in vol. 1, 112–172. Essential descriptions are also found in Ker, *Catalogue*.

4 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 267 and Dammery, "The Law Code," vol. 1, 34–35. See further the conclusions of B. Jane Stanfield, "Standardization in the Anglo-Saxon Laws: A Diplomatic Study," unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Tennessee: 1984), 19–21, 71–73, 89–93. The focus of the analysis is *Alfred-Ine*.

5 Following the discussion of the terms by Allen Frantzen, "The Form and Function of the Preface in the Poetry and Prose of Alfred's Reign," in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Timothy Reuter,

followed by seventy-six legal statements. These features serve to unify the two codes and to demonstrate that, even though they are more numerous, Ine's laws are supplementary to Alfred's.

Including its twelfth-century Latin translations incorporated into the *Instituta Cnuti* and *Quadripartitus*, Alfred's code survives in ten copies, some incomplete.⁶ Of these, six versions are in Old English, along with evidence of at least one lost version. The earliest copies, produced in Winchester, the seat of Alfred's kingdom, date from the mid-tenth to the first decades of the eleventh century, and therefore are the closest to what the king promulgated. These copies are the simplest to describe because they appear within historical records and only begin to show the kinds of accretions to *Alfred-Ine* that occur over time.

- (1) CCCC 173, "The Parker Manuscript," fols. 33r–52v, mid-tenth century, Winchester; by c.1070 in Christ Church, Canterbury.⁷ Though copied separately, in what Parkes has defined as booklet three of the codex, *Alfred-Ine* was soon joined to a genealogy of the West-Saxon kings to Alfred and a compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle from A.D. 900–1001, with intermittent later additions to the annals.⁸ Assembled as part of the record of achievements of the West-Saxon dynasty, the laws of Alfred and Ine in this codex are the earliest version to survive. Their manuscript context indicates that even at this early date relative to their composition, *Alfred-Ine* was viewed as historical record rather than, for example, a reference book to be consulted in legal cases.
- (2) London, BL, Cotton Otho B.xi, now fols. 49, 50, 52, 53, first quarter of the eleventh century, Winchester. Badly damaged in the Cotton Library fire

Studies in Early Medieval Britain (Aldershot, UK: 2003), 121–136, at 124, this chapter will use *prologue* and *preface* interchangeably to refer to Alfred's lengthy statement preceding the laws.

- 6 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 265. The fragment in BL, Burney MS 277 will be discussed later in this chapter.
- 7 Ker, *Catalogue*, p. 59. A complete facsimile, ed. Robin Flower and Hugh Smith, appears in *The Parker Chronicle and Laws*, EETS 208 (Oxford: 1941; rpr. 1973). An extensive description of this portion of the MS appears in Mildred Budny, *Insular, Anglo-Saxon, and Early Anglo-Norman Manuscript Art at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Kalamazoo, MI: 1997), vol. 1, 151–160. Further paleographic information is provided by M.B. Parkes in "The Paleography of the Parker Manuscript of the *Chronicle*, Laws and Sedulius, and Historiography at Winchester in the Late Ninth and Tenth Centuries," *Anglo-Saxon England* 5 (1976): 149–171.
- 8 David Dumville has refined some of Parkes's conclusions and argued for a date in the 930s for the copying of *Alfred-Ine* in *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar* (Woodbridge: 1992), 124–139.

of 1731, the text of this MS survives complete in BL Add. 43703, a transcript made by Laurence Nowell in 1562.⁹ *Alfred-Ine* appears within a group of texts probably copied from the Parker MS, namely, the West-Saxon genealogy to Alfred, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle to 1001, and papal and episcopal lists.¹⁰ Between these materials and *Alfred-Ine* is a copy of *II Æthelstan*, the so-called Grately code issued c.928, a collection of twenty-six laws dealing with theft, lordless men, landless men, exchange and purchase, ordeals, and refusal of justice, among other issues.¹¹ There is some dispute as to whether Æthelstan's Exeter code (*V Æthelstan*, c.933) and a copy of *Iudex*, a short text on judges and judging, accompanied *II Æthelstan*.¹² Following *Alfred-Ine* are an appended note on fines for adultery (*Ymb Æwbricas*), a version of the Burghal Hidage—a project of fortifications begun under Alfred, and a note on the number of hides of land required to defend certain lengths of wall based upon one man per hide. Furthermore, this copy of *Alfred-Ine* differs somewhat from that in the Parker manuscript, even allowing for errors made by Nowell, and thus indicates the influence of yet another version of the laws no longer extant.¹³

As this early Winchester manuscript reveals, the laws could be viewed as records, and certainly were so early on, but they also represented a growing repository of legal tradition committed to writing. In particular, the treatment of *Alfred-Ine* in Otho B.xi foreshadows developments to come. First, a scribe saw fit to precede *Alfred-Ine* with Æthelstan's Grately code, containing a reference to his predecessor's work as *seo domboc*.¹⁴

- 9 Robin Flower announced the discovery of this transcript and discussed it in a series of three articles: "Laurence Nowell and a Recovered Anglo-Saxon Poem," *British Museum Quarterly* 8 (1934–35): 130–132; "Laurence Nowell and the Discovery of England in Tudor Times," *Publications of the British Academy* 21 (1935): 47–73; and "The Text of the Burghal Hidage," *London Medieval Studies* 1 (1937): 60–64.
- 10 Parkes, "The Parker Manuscript," 170.
- 11 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, outlines the transmission of the text on 292 and discusses its provisions on 304–305.
- 12 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 176–177, argues that Nowell found *V Æthelstan* and *Iudex* in another MS and added them to his transcript of Otho B.xi. Ker published evidence that both texts were in the MS before it burned in his *Catalogue*, 232. Roland Torkar, in his indispensable study of Otho B.xi and Add. 43703, *Eine Altenglische Übersetzung von Alcuins "De Virtutibus et Vitiis," Kap. 20 (Liebermanns Judex): Untersuchungen und Textausgabe* (Munich: 1981), lays out both possibilities. See esp. the analysis on 43. For the text of *V Æthelstan*, see Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 166–168.
- 13 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 173–175.
- 14 *II Æthelstan* 5; see Liebermann, *Gesetze* vol. 1, 152. There are four references in total: *II Edward* 5.2, *II Æthelstan* 5, *II Edgar* 3, and *II Edgar* 5. Dammary, "The Law Code," 1: 2.

This designation conveys both the cultural weight *Alfred-Ine* carried within a generation after its creation and the reason for its position within the manuscript. Just as the laws of Ine complement and support Alfred's legislation by following it, so *Alfred-Ine* is situated to convey the tradition and authority to which Æthelstan's code alludes. In addition, Otho B.xi illustrates the magnetic force of *Alfred-Ine* with the statement on fines for adultery (*Ymb Æwbricas*) added to the end of Ine's code.¹⁵ Although other items attach themselves to later copies of *Alfred-Ine*, this text appears here uniquely and would not be known but for Nowell's transcript of the MS. The two subsequent texts related to the Burghal Hidage further underline Alfred's achievements and, as Wormald points out, are historical rather than contemporary documents concerning the making of the English kingdom.¹⁶ If *Iudex* in fact preceded *Alfred-Ine*, its position as a precursor to Alfred's preface would see further development in a later manuscript.

Three additional manuscripts containing Alfred's *domboc*, produced from the mid-eleventh through the first quarter of the twelfth century, have ties to southeastern England, the source of most copies and translations of Anglo-Saxon laws during this period. These manuscripts are properly designated legal collections, reflecting their focus on royal and anonymous legislation.

- (3) London, BL, Cotton Nero A.i, part A, fols. 51–57v, mid-eleventh century, probably Canterbury.¹⁷ The text of *Alfred-Ine* breaks off near the end of the preface, but its position within the truncated legal collection conveys evidence of its meaning for the compiler.¹⁸ The MS opens with the royal codes *I* and *II Cnut* (1020/1).¹⁹ Cnut's laws draw directly from *Alfred-Ine* in seven instances, and comprise the only other comprehensive set of legal codes extant from the Anglo-Saxon period.²⁰ These are copied in one

15 See the description in Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 175–176, and the analysis with accompanying translation on 372–373. Dammary discusses the accretions to *Alfred-Ine* in “The Law Code,” vol. 1, 177.

16 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 179.

17 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, argues that the two parts of this MS were not joined before the mid-sixteenth century, and that Canterbury is the most likely origin of part A. H.R. Loyn, in his facsimile edition of the MS, *A Wulfstan Manuscript*, EEMF 17 (Copenhagen: 1971), 45–46, leans toward Worcester or York as the origin of part A, though he acknowledges Kentish elements in its texts.

18 Liebermann, *Die Gesetze* vol. 1, 44, *Alf El* 49.5.

19 See Ker, *Catalogue*, 210–211. For the text, see Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 278–370.

20 See the chart and summary of *I–II Cnut*'s sources (Table 5.4) in Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 356–360.

hand in a unique format for this text designed to imitate the traditional presentation of *Alfred-Ine*, as Wormald has noted.²¹ Each statement begins a new line with a large, rubricated initial set into the left-hand margin of the page. If intentional, this evocative format would imply the living legacy of the *domboc* as inspiration and model. Continuing in reverse chronological order after *I–II Cnut*, *II–III Edgar* and *Alfred-Ine*, as far as it goes, were copied separately by another hand and then joined to Cnut's codes. *I–II Cnut* also drew extensively from *II–III Edgar*, at least twenty-two times, including twelve quotations.²² As the first Anglo-Saxon legislation divided into ecclesiastical (*II Edgar*) and secular (*III Edgar*) affairs, Edgar's codes focus respectively on payments of church dues and regulations regarding the administration of justice. They do not quote Alfred directly, but the opening statement of *II Edgar*, expressing the right of every man to justice under the law and admonishing judges to make fair judgments, may allude to Alfred's legendary concern with judicial matters.²³

Alfred-Ine follows *II–III Edgar* in an interesting presentation of the text. Two short legal statements known as *Romscot* and *Iudex* appear between the chapter list and the preface. This is the unique copy of *Romscot*, brief directions for paying Peter's Pence, and one of two extant copies of *Iudex*, which Wormald calls "a short treatise on judicial morals."²⁴ The latter is in fact a translation of Chapter 20, *De iudicibus*, from Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis*, an influential collection of *sententiae* translated into Old English and used widely by Anglo-Saxon homilists.²⁵ Because of their position between the chapter list and the preface in Cotton Nero A.1, part A, *Romscot* and *Iudex* act as important preliminary statements to *Alfred-Ine* while linking it to the major concerns of *II–III Edgar*. *Romscot* updates Ine's fourth clause regarding non-payment of Church-scot.²⁶ *Iudex* complements Alfred's focus upon just laws and just

21 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 227.

22 The text is in Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 192–206.

23 See Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, ed. William Henry Stevenson and updated by Dorothy Whitelock (Oxford: 1959), §106, 92–95; trans. in K&L, 109–110 and nn. 255–259 on 275.

24 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 382. *Romscot* and *Iudex* are edited in Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 474–476.

25 See the entry by Paul E. Szarmach in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture: A Trial Version*, ed. Frederick M. Biggs, Thomas D. Hill, and Paul E. Szarmach (Binghamton, NY: 1990), 20–21. The most authoritative treatment of *Iudex* is provided by Torkar in *Eine Altenglische Übersetzung*.

26 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 368. However, *I Cnut* 9.1 further updates the provisions of *Romscot*; see Loyn, *A Wulfstan Manuscript*, 45.

judgments and, by extension, ruling justly.²⁷ This is the unique surviving instance of extraneous materials inserted between the prefatory materials of *Alfred-Ine*, however, and therefore it may reveal the specific interests of the compiler and/or the foundation in which he worked. Loyn, in fact, argues that the inclusion of these preliminary texts reflects contemporary interest in the issues covered therein and may relate to Wulfstan II, bishop of Worcester 1063–95.²⁸

- (4) cccc, 383—late eleventh/early twelfth century, probably from St. Paul's Cathedral, London.²⁹ This extensive collection of Anglo-Saxon law includes another partial copy of *Alfred-Ine*, missing the first quire, by Wormald's conjecture, but showing some new features of interest.³⁰ First, in place of its usual position between the preface and the laws, the chapter list along with some added titles has been integrated with the text, so that individual legal statements are accompanied by a chapter rubric. Second, three additional legal pieces follow directly upon *Alfred-Ine*, handled as continuations to the code.³¹ These are “new” appendages, as opposed to the ones attached to earlier copies of *Alfred-Ine*, but the linkage is not original to the version in cccc 383, as can be demonstrated from confusion in the copying process. The pieces are as follows: *Be Blaserum*, a short statement of ordeals designated for incendiaries and sneaky murderers; *Forfang*, a text concerning rewards for stolen property; and *Hundred*, otherwise known as *I Edgar*, instructions for meetings of the hundred.³² All three are concerned with civil enforcement, and they come to be translated as a unit into the Latin compendium *Quadripartitus*, produced about 1110. In fact, as will be seen from the discussion of the *Textus Roffensis* below, the presentation in cccc 383 is close to the final form taken by *Alfred-Ine* in its manuscript history.³³ Wormald detects the influence of Edward the Elder in these supplementary texts, because the

27 In *The Governance of Anglo-Saxon England 500–1087* (London: 1984), 64–65, H.R. Loyn analyzes the king's ideas about justice as expressed in the preface. See also Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 227.

28 Loyn, *A Wulfstan Manuscript*, 45.

29 See Ker, *Catalogue*, 113; and Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 230.

30 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 230–231.

31 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 231, describes how these continuations are laid out.

32 Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1: 388, 388–390, and 192–194, respectively.

33 Wormald puts it better: “Corpus 383 demonstrates that royal legislation acquired ‘tails’ of originally unrelated but no longer distinguishable matter” (*Making of English Law*, 242).

king advocated the addition of practical working clauses to the *domboc* as an aid to the reeves charged with enforcement.³⁴

As a post-Conquest legal manuscript, CCCC 383 reflects Norman interest in the Anglo-Saxon legal tradition. Such collections tend to be expansive, bringing together royal codes with shorter texts of varying types. After *Alfred-Ine* and its supplements open CCCC 383, the assemblage adheres to no discernible order, and, in fact, it repeats one code as it incorporates laws from different exemplars.³⁵ On the other hand, the selection and formatting of the texts foregrounds works linked specifically to Alfred while omitting attributions for other royal codes. One example appears in the treatment of *I Æthelred*, the code issued at Woodstock, which seems to have been copied here originally as a fourth supplementary text to *Alfred-Ine*.³⁶ In CCCC 383, *I Æthelred* first began without a break following *Hundred*, but later received a title to the right of its erased and re-copied first line. Two further texts associated with Alfred complete the series: a version of the treaty between Alfred and the Viking leader Guthrum, rubricated *Alfredes laga cyninges*, and the so-called laws of Edward and Guthrum, entitled *Eft his. 7 Guðrumes 7 eadwardes*, his referring to Alfred. By contrast, subsequent royal codes included in the manuscript—*II Æthelstan*, *I-II Cnut*, *I-II Edward*, and *I-II Edmund*—lack a royal attribution and are rubricated only for topic, by individual clause.³⁷ It seems that Alfred alone, with his legacy of achieving peace with the Danes, was of interest as a king in this collection.³⁸

- (5) Rochester Cathedral, *Textus Roffensis*, 1123–24—Copied in the distinctive hand of the main Rochester scribe of the period, this legal collection accompanied by a cartulary remained close to home for most of its career. The laws opened originally with the earliest copy of the *Instituta Cnuti*, a Latin compilation drawn from *I-II Cnut*, *Alfred-Ine*, *II Edgar*, and anonymous legal materials, followed by two other Norman texts, the so-called

34 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 379.

35 Mary P. Richards, "The Manuscript Contexts of the Old English Laws: Tradition and Innovation," in *Studies in Earlier Old English Prose*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany, NY: 1986), 171–192, at 182–184.

36 Richards, "Manuscript Contexts," 182. See further Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 232 and Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 216–220.

37 *I-II Cnut* is, however, acephalous in CCCC 383. For *I-II Edward*, see Liebermann, *Die Gesetze* vol. 1, 138–144; for *I-II Edmund*, vol. 1, 184–190.

38 Richards, "Manuscript Contexts," 183.

Ten Articles of William I and an excerpt from the Decretals of Pseudo-Isidore, *De accusatoribus*.³⁹ Thereafter came a substantial series of English royal codes, beginning with unique copies of the Kentish laws of Æthelberht, Hlothhere and Eadric, and Wihtræd in historical order.⁴⁰ A brief anonymous regulation, *Hadbot*, thought to be the work of Archbishop Wulfstan, followed Wihtræd.⁴¹ As seems to be the case elsewhere in the *Textus*, the compiler associated his materials by topic, here adding *Hadbot*, citing penalties for offenses to the seven ranks of clergy, to Wihtræd's laws dealing with the clergy and crimes against the church.⁴²

The next group of texts relates directly to the interests of this chapter. A copy of the West-Saxon genealogy, now updated through Æthelred II (d. 1016), completes the quire containing the Kentish laws and provides a transition to *Alfred-Ine*. In the *Textus Roffensis* the genealogy has been separated from the regnal and episcopal lists that often accompany it; those lists appear at the end of the book. The change therefore sharpens the dynastic context of the *domboc* to follow. The short legal texts, *Be Blaserum* and *Forfang*, are again appended to the laws of Ine. Wormald has shown that the Rochester legal collection had a common ancestor with that in CCC 383, which may account for the arrangement. He also suggests that the supplements were added after the main text of *Alfred-Ine* was copied.⁴³ The *Textus* proceeds with numerous royal codes in rough chronological order interspersed with a variety of shorter legal statements on topics such as the proper procedures for the ordeal (*Ordal*) and prohibitions against robbing the dead (*Wal*).⁴⁴

The contents and organization of the *Textus Roffensis* demonstrate *Alfred-Ine*'s influence upon Anglo-Saxon legislation. First, *the Instituta Cnuti* draws upon *Alfred-Ine* at least thirteen times to supplement the laws of Cnut.⁴⁵

39 See Richards, "Manuscript Contexts," 184–185. Wormald points out the close association of the *Instituta* and *Articles* in *Making of English Law*, 402–403. The texts are in Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, as follows: *Instituta Cnuti* vol. 1, 612–616; *Ten Articles of William I* vol. 1, 486–488. See also Felix Liebermann, "De accusatoribus aus Pseudo-Isidor," *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Kirchenrecht* 1 (1901): 1–5.

40 These texts appear in order in Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 3–14.

41 Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 464–468.

42 Richards, "Manuscript Contexts," 185.

43 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 248–249.

44 For *Ordal*, see Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 386–387; for *Wal*, vol. 1, 392.

45 See Liebermann's analysis of the sources of *Instituta Cnuti* in *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 612–616. The author probably did not have had access to the Kentish royal codes since he does not include them in his work.

Second, the position of the *Instituta Cnuti*, standing in for Cnut's laws at the head of the legal collection, follows precedent in Cotton Nero A.i, part A. Cnut's laws came to be viewed, it seems, as the culmination of Anglo-Saxon legislation, but were understood to be the product of a tradition rooted in Alfred's *domboc*. And just as *Alfred-Ine* could be augmented in various ways as it was re-copied, it served a similar purpose by supplementing Cnut's comprehensive code when translated by a Norman writer. The chronology of Anglo-Saxon legislation mattered less than assembling a full catalogue of its components.

At the time they were recorded in the Parker manuscript CCCC 173, the laws of Alfred and Ine stood as legal texts among various records of the West Saxon achievement. Soon thereafter, however, the *domboc* attracted unrelated, anonymous pieces. As royal legislation proliferated, the manuscript contexts of *Alfred-Ine* grew ever more complex. Both of these trends are clear in the preceding survey. *Alfred-Ine*'s links to the West-Saxon dynasty and, in particular, to the accomplishments of Alfred himself, persist through the centuries as the *domboc* was copied, expanded, and re-purposed. The manuscripts demonstrate that his law book was an historical milestone, long-lived in its influence and inspirational to later rulers. Moreover, *Alfred-Ine* lived on, not only in the *Instituta Cnuti* but in the much-revised and widely disseminated *Quadripartitus*.⁴⁶ There the full text of *Alfred-Ine*, translated into Latin, continued to follow *I–II Cnut* in five copies produced from the second quarter of the twelfth century through the early thirteenth century. The placement of chapter rubrics varies in these copies, but they always appear. Four additional copies, known as the "London Collection," separate Ine's code from Alfred's on chronological principles and omit chapter rubrics.⁴⁷ However, they all preserve Ine's "tail," the three short pieces known as *Blaseras*, *Forfang*, and *Hundred*. This final group of manuscripts demonstrates that *Alfred-Ine* continued to be reproduced and studied within the body of Anglo-Saxon legislation into the fourteenth century. One final point: given the level of interest and effort that went into the legal compendia, it is hard to understand how the Kentish laws, so near at hand in Rochester, at least, could have been overlooked, especially since Alfred mentions them in

46 Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 529–546.

47 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 236–244. See further Patrick Wormald, "Quadripartitus," in *Law and Government in Medieval England and Normandy: Studies Presented to Sir James Holt*, ed. George Garnett and John Hudson (Cambridge: 1994), 111–147; rpr. with corrections and additions in Patrick Wormald, *Legal Culture in the Early Medieval West: Law as Text, Image, Experience* (London and Rio Grande, OH: 1999), 81–114.

his preface, but such was the case. The result was that *Alfred-Ine* held pride of place everywhere but in the *Textus Roffensis* as the first royal code.

II Format as Symbol

The influence of the *domboc* as copied into CCCC 173 would be hard to overestimate. From its first surviving copy, *Alfred-Ine* was laid out formally with a list of chapter rubrics, a lengthy preface preceding the laws, and numbered legal statements. The origin of the rubrics is disputed, but the fact is that they traveled with *Alfred-Ine* throughout its manuscript history. The formality of the *domboc* surely contributed to its reputation. No wonder Alfred's successors thought of their laws as supplementing *Alfred-Ine*. In the Parker manuscript (CCCC 173), *Alfred-Ine* has 120 chapter rubrics. The rubrics tie the two royal codes into one unit in which the transition between Alfred's laws and Ine's occurs between Chapters 43 and 44. Item forty-four in the chapter list is *Be Ines domum*, and Ine's preface constitutes that chapter. This is physical evidence that the codes were intended to accompany one another in the order they appear, and that Ine's laws had been purposely incorporated into the *domboc*, probably at its inception. The other two surviving copies of this portion of *Alfred-Ine* in CCCC 383 and the *Textus Roffensis*, both post-Conquest productions, announce the laws of Ine with special rubrics inserted before Chapter 44: *Ines lage* and *Ines cyninges asetnysse* and respectively.⁴⁸ In these manuscripts, *Alfred-Ine* appears within extensive collections of royal codes, leading, perhaps, to greater interest in highlighting the name of the king.

Scholars have long pointed out the chapter rubrics' inadequacies at reflecting the full contents of each legal statement in the *domboc*.⁴⁹ For example, items forty, forty-one, and forty-two begin Alfred's injury tariff, citing penalties for inflicting head wounds, scalp wounds, and blows to the ear respectively. Item forty-three, the last numbered of Alfred's laws, encompasses the remainder of injuries, from the eye to the lower body, hence the rubric *Be monnes eagwunde 7 oðerra missenlicra lima*.⁵⁰ Rather than a guide to the contents of the laws, the chapter list is better viewed in CCCC 173 as a formal set piece, part

48 Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 88–89.

49 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, summarizes the situation on 267–270, inclusive of his notes. More thorough analysis is provided by Dammary, "The Law Code," vol. 1, 184–198.

50 "Concerning wounds to the eye and other assorted limbs." The Old English text is quoted from CCCC 173 in Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 20.

of the prefatory materials to a document intended as a record, not a reference. No other royal code has a chapter list or numbers.

Much the same situation explains the treatment of Alfred's preface. It is considerably longer than comparable royal statements, tracing the king's judicial philosophy from Moses and ending with the Golden Rule as the first law. The only venture into the practicalities of law-giving occurs when Alfred describes his process of gathering and selecting his source materials. The preface is in keeping with Alfred's practice of providing these to other, translated works associated with him, but it is not imitated by his royal successors.⁵¹ It is the type of writing that we associate with the literary and intellectual career of Alfred, yet its inclusion as another unique feature of *Alfred-Ine* suffices to set the Christian context of law-giving to come. The provision of chapter lists and a preface, squarely within the tradition of the medieval Vulgate, seems natural for a work drawing links to the Old and New Testaments to contextualize and even justify its existence.

Wormald sees symbolic implications in Alfred's prefatory materials that indicate how the king himself might have viewed his *domboc*. He points out that the division of *Alfred-Ine* into 120 chapters could be a purposeful link to Moses (through his age at death) and a numerical interpretation as law.⁵² "The first chapter number came precisely when Alfred finished reporting the events of Scripture [in the preface], and began his account of subsequent Christian legislation, culminating in his own. Biblical law, for which 120 was multiply symbolic, was followed by post-biblical, more especially West-Saxon, law in 120 chapters."⁵³ In subsequent discussion, Wormald draws connections to the thought of Archbishop Hincmar of Reims, who was closely associated with some of the legislation of Charles the Bald in the ninth century.⁵⁴ Whether or not Alfred knew the works of Hincmar directly, Wormald believes that he was influenced by the latter's theories to show, in his preface, how West-Saxon law belonged to "the history of divine legislation for humanity."⁵⁵ From these observations, Wormald concludes that Alfred cared more about the symbolic value of his law book than its role in legislation.

51 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 418, points out that over a fifth of the *domboc* is devoted to the preface.

52 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 417. Dammary, "The Law Code," vol. 1, 221, expresses doubt about Alfred's interest in "numerological symbolism."

53 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 418.

54 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 423–426.

55 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 426.

While the chapter numbering and the content of the preface communicated the weighty matter of Alfred's project, the laws themselves gave substance and shape to the legal tradition of Anglo-Saxon England. Certainly those coming after Alfred, the scribes who copied *Alfred-Ine* and the kings who reckoned that they were supplementing the *domboc* with their own legislation, thought of the material work even if they did not consult it. On the other hand, King Alfred could have influenced the *domboc*'s final form, thereby conferring the status that it carried throughout its career. What we can say is that no other king attempted a philosophical introduction, long or short, nor did they allude to Alfred's preface in their own work. The prefatory materials to *Alfred-Ine* are *sui generis* and the code itself establishes a legislative trunk from which later royal legislation branches.

The distinctive format of *Alfred-Ine* extends to the presentation of the individual legal statements. In the Parker manuscript, the first numbered law, the Golden Rule, begins with a decorated O having a tilted Greek cross-shaped design in the center.⁵⁶ Although this capital might seem significant in light of Wormald's emphasis on the symbolic meaning of the *domboc*, in fact, two other similarly decorated initials, both G, occur further on in the laws at statements numbered nineteen and forty-seven.⁵⁷ These and all initials in the text are in black ink. The chapter number 1 is written in the left margin by O; it could be a later addition, because the number, a small Roman numeral, normally precedes each law in space remaining at the end of the previous statement. The succeeding laws open with a large capital, often two lines in height, at the left margin. Only Ine's preface beginning *Ic ine* receives special treatment, where the I extends more than three full lines in height. The overall effect foregrounds the opening of each legal statement, while the numbering system helps to locate an individual law according to the chapter list.⁵⁸

The remaining fragments of Cotton Otho B.xi indicate that it also opened with a chapter list and included chapter numbers prior to each law.⁵⁹ BL Burney 277 (second half of the eleventh century) contains only a portion of Ine's laws, but these are preceded by chapter numbers and given black and red

56 Budny, *cccc Catalogue*, vol. 1, 159–160, describes the decoration as “a double outer contour, with bulbous curves at the quadrant.” My description is intended to convey the symbolic aspect of the image.

57 Various other opening initials have bits of decoration throughout the laws; see Budny as above and vol. 2, plates 108, 109 for details.

58 In this and the following discussion of manuscript layouts, I am indebted to the careful work of B. Jane Stanfield's doctoral thesis, “Standardization in the Anglo-Saxon Laws,” along with my own observations of the MSS.

59 Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 16–20 and 72–78.

initials.⁶⁰ In CCCC 383, where the text has fewer losses, large, often two-line, red initials are entered in space to the left of each law, followed by a display script used for the first few words and space appropriate for chapter numerals. The opening red I of Ine's laws extends six lines. But in place of numbers, the chapter rubrics, written in red, are squeezed into the space between the laws, with some modifications and additions to the traditional group. For example, in all other prefatory chapter lists, the rubric for Chapter 5 reads *Be hlaforð-searwe*, but CCCC 383 has the rubric *Be cyninges swicdome* inserted before the law. Wormald interprets these innovations as a second rubricator's attempts to make the collection more user friendly.⁶¹ He doubts that the MS had an inaugural rubric list, and sees this new method of rubrication as a substitute.⁶² Alternatively, it is possible that this scribe was not familiar with the traditional presentation of *Alfred-Ine* and, when faced with a chapter list and blank spaces, made an unorthodox decision to insert rubrics rather than numbers.

In fact, by reason of its idiosyncratic treatment of the chapter rubrics, CCCC 383 is the outlier among the copies of *Alfred-Ine*. As seen in the slightly later *Textus Roffensis*, the traditional format of these laws persists through the last surviving copy in Old English. Two changes appear on the first page, fol. 9r: a title in red *Þis syndon þa domas ðe Ælfred cyncg geceas* heads the list of chapter rubrics; and the list is copied in two columns covering 121 items, the last being the supplemental piece, *Be blaserum 7 be mordslihtum*.⁶³ Poor planning results in two words from the Chapter 119 rubric, along with the entries for Chapters 120 and 121, spilling into the top margin of fol. 11r and intruding into the space required for a decorative red, round-backed D to open Alfred's preface.⁶⁴ Thereafter the presentation of the preface and laws follows traditional practice. A large red marginal Ð marks the transition between God's commandments and West Saxon law on fol. 14r. This compares with a three-line Þ at the same position in the text in CCCC 173, fol. 38b. The decorated O described above in CCCC 173, fol. 39b, is paralleled by a large O on fol. 15r in the *Textus*. A large block marginal Æ marking the opening of Chapter 2 completes the run of similarities between the earliest (fol. 40a) and latest (fol. 16r) copies of the preface to *Alfred-Ine*.

60 Ker, *Catalogue*, 171–172.

61 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 235. Wormald here provides details of the added rubrics.

62 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 213.

63 Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 388.

64 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 249, states that both the rubric and text of Chapter 121 are later additions by the main scribe.

Perhaps because he had so much material to include in the *Textus* law book, the scribe has taken several measures to save space. Besides compressing the chapter list, he omits the generous spacing between segments of Alfred's preface, such as can be seen in CCCC 173 on fols. 38b, 39b, and 40a. He leaves less room between laws to enter numbers for the early chapters. In these instances, the number often appears following the first line of the law to which it refers, rather than at the end of the superior line at the conclusion of the previous law. By fol. 17r (within quire five) the scribe gains control of his spacing and follows the traditional practice of entering the next chapter number at the end of the preceding law through the remainder of *Alfred-Ine*. To mark the opening to Ine's laws, he uses a grand initial I, some six lines in height (fol. 24v).

Aside from the differences created by space saving and by the liberal use of color, especially red, to highlight initials in the *Textus Roffensis*, part of the manuscript's overall decorative scheme, the laws of Alfred and Ine appear in the recognizable formal unit following specific conventions. The presentation, I argue, continues to convey the prestige of the West Saxon dynasty as it culminated in Alfred's reign. Had the Kentish laws been influential in the dissemination of Anglo-Saxon legislation, the case might look different; but as it stands, the unique manuscript format of *Alfred-Ine* not only persists as an integral part of its identity, but the stability of the *domboc* appears to have influenced subsequent royal legislation.⁶⁵ The later codes are not necessarily modeled on the *domboc*, although they usually include at least a short preface and employ the most prominent stylistic feature, the "*Gif*" clause stating the crime, followed by the appropriate punishment.⁶⁶ Each code, likewise, receives relatively consistent treatment as it is re-copied, in the manner of other types of records kept in lists, as Robinson has pointed out.⁶⁷ The difference is that, whereas the order of individual legal statements within a code remains constant, the order of codes within a given manuscript collection varies. Thus the supplements to *Alfred-Ine* seem to be added as the compiler chooses, but never within the body of the laws. It needs to be said that, whereas the transmission of *Alfred-Ine* is relatively straightforward, the situation regarding other some other royal legislation, such as that of Æthelstan, is considerably more complex, possibly reflecting work in process.⁶⁸

65 On this topic generally, see Mary P. Richards, "Elements of a Written Standard in the Old English Laws," in *Standardizing English: Essays in the History of Language Change*, ed. Joseph B. Trahern, Jr., Tennessee Studies in Literature 31 (Knoxville, TN: 1989), 1–22.

66 These features originate in the Kentish laws and are exploited fully by Ine and Alfred.

67 Fred C. Robinson, "Old English Literature in Its Most Immediate Context," in *Old English Literature in Context: Ten Essays*, ed. John D. Niles (Cambridge: 1980), 11–29, at 26.

68 See Wormald's analysis of Æthelstan's legislation in *Making of English Law*, 290–300.

The written form of *Alfred-Ine*, as well as its reputation, likely contributed to the respect it received from later law givers. Admittedly, the king associated with the subsequent royal code, Edward the Elder, was Alfred's son, but the prologue to *I Edward* is instructive:

Eadwerd cyning byt ðam gerefum eallum, þæt ge deman swa rihte domas swa ge rihtoste cunnon, 7 hit on ðære domboc stande. Ne wandieð for nanum ðingum folcriht to gerecanne...⁶⁹

The philosophy of adjudication expressed here is congruent with the latter part of Alfred's preface. More importantly, the phrase *7 hit on ðære domboc stande* implies consultation of the laws as text. The *domboc* has become the authority in the judicial process. Edward distinguishes the written law from *folcriht*, popular law; written law is to be consulted, whereas popular law is to be interpreted perhaps by recourse to written law. With these statements, Edward acknowledges the power of his father's legislation, and arguably sets the course for its use during a century or more.⁷⁰

III Preliminary Materials: Chapters and Preface

Because no consideration of the legal aspects of *Alfred-Ine* should omit the chapters and prologue, we will discuss them here in the context of their relationship to the law codes.⁷¹ For most of its life, as the evidence shows, *Alfred-Ine* traveled without a title. The only surviving example appears in the *Textus*

69 Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 138. "King Edward commands all his reeves, that you make as correct judgments as you know how to do most rightly, as fixed in the *domboc*. Do not for any reason fail to interpret public law..." Wormald discusses this passage along with the codes of Edward in *Making of English Law*, 286–290.

70 In *The Political Thought of Alfred the Great*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 4th ser., 67 (Cambridge: 2007), esp. 214–241, and more recently in "Written Law and the Communication of Authority in Tenth-Century England," *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century: Studies in Honour of Wilhelm Levison (1876–1947)*, ed. David Rollason, Conrad Leyser, and Hannah Williams (Turnhout, Belgium: 2010), 331–350, David Pratt considers the textualization of legal culture in the century after Alfred, evidenced best, he argues, in the legislation of King Athelstan. Although Pratt's emphasis differs from the descriptive approach offered in this chapter, he stresses the means by which written materials reflecting current practice became incorporated into law.

71 See Susan Irvine, Chapter 5, "The Alfredian Prefaces and Epilogues," in this volume, for an analysis of the body of Alfred's prefaces.

Roffensis. Otherwise, the rubric to Chapter 1, by far the lengthiest in the list, serves that purpose:

I. Be ðon þæt mon ne scyle oþrum deman buton swa he wille, þæt him mon deme.⁷²

As several commentators have pointed out, this rubric communicates the essence of Alfred's message, and in that sense it makes a fitting opening to his work. With the exception of CCCC 383, copies of the chapter list remain consistent from the earliest in CCCC 173 through the *Textus* and even their Latin translation in *Quadripartitus*.⁷³ In Old English, each rubric begins with *Be* and most often consists of three or four key words. This method resembles that followed by compilers of book lists in Anglo-Saxon England, whereby a few words, possibly including an author's name, may be used to designate anything from a service book to a complex volume of obscure texts.⁷⁴ Further, the *Alfred-Ine* chapter list groups loosely related legal statements into uneven units.⁷⁵ To wit, the laws for Chapter 6, gathered under a rubric regarding sanctuary in a church (*Be ciricene friðe*), cover a range of issues regarding the length of time and conditions a fugitive must observe to remain in protection. The chapter concludes with a provision of special fines for those who steal on Sundays or other holy days. Chapter 7, on the other hand, has two brief statements about punishments for stealing in a church (*Be circan stale*).⁷⁶ The same inconsistency applies to Ine's codes, for example Chapter 79, where a law regarding livestock transactions is hitched to a statement of procedures for handling the homicide of a thief.⁷⁷

72 Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 16, quoting CCCC 173 (MS. E). "Concerning that, a man shall not judge another except as he wishes that a man judge him," the Golden Rule.

73 The chapter lists are printed in parallel by Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 16–26. For discussion, see Dammary, "The Law Code," vol. 1, 181.

74 For analyses of these lists, see Michael Lapidge, "Surviving Booklists from Anglo-Saxon England," *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss (Cambridge: 1985); rpr. with additions and corrections in *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: Basic Readings*, ed. Mary P. Richards (New York: 1994), 84–164.

75 One can view chapter rubrics and text together in *The Laws of the Earliest English Kings*, ed. F.L. Attenborough (Cambridge: 1922). Attenborough prints rubrics in brackets before the laws, but unfortunately does not distinguish between those in the traditional chapter lists and the ones added in CCCC 383. He uses only the CCCC 383 rubrics for his edition of Ine's laws. Care must be taken to sort out the situation by consulting Liebermann.

76 Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 50–52.

77 Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 104.

Whoever composed the chapter rubrics not only picked up key words from the laws to use as entries, but generated 120 uneven units. The latter exercise proved to be problematic, as evidenced in the Parker manuscript, where the thirteen and one-half pages of Alfred's laws are divided into forty-three units, whereas the eleven and one-half pages of Ine's laws comprise the remaining seventy-seven chapters. Arguably, the rubrics show signs of hasty, even superficial work required to complete the document; they display the range of Alfred's law giving as well as the legal legacy of his kinsman Ine, but do not serve as a practical guide to the contents. The compiler acknowledges neither Alfred's authorship nor his prologue preceding the laws. For these reasons, it seems doubtful that Alfred had a direct hand in the rubrics' production, though, per Wormald, he could have instructed scribes to work out 120 divisions in the law book, beginning with the all-important Golden Rule, to enhance its symbolic associations.

The preface is an Alfredian monument of a different sort. From the opening word *Dryhten*, dignified by a handsome initial in the manuscripts, the king announces the source of his inspiration and the Christian context in which his laws representing the English nation are to be understood. As set forth in CCCC 173, the prologue begins on a recto page. The opening line *Dryhten wæs sprecen* is written in block capitals two lines in height, seemingly to reinforce the idea that the law came ultimately from the word of God. Michael Treschow analyzes Alfred's purposeful selections from *Exodus* in this first portion of the prologue, which the king may have taken from an Irish canonical collection known as the *Liber ex lege Moysi*, and shows how Anglo-Saxon custom and law are reflected in the excerpts.⁷⁸ Treschow also observes that an important transition occurs in Section 49 (Liebermann's numbering) of the prologue, marking the point where Alfred moves from Mosaic law to the law of Christ.⁷⁹ With the statement "Pis sindon ða domas þe se ælmihtega god self sprecende wæs to moyse...," Alfred echoes the opening words of the preface while providing closure to his treatment of the Old Law in an envelope pattern.⁸⁰ Alfred and/or the copyist in CCCC 173 recognized the transition by beginning a new line of

78 Michael Treschow, "The Prologue to Alfred's Law Code: Instruction in the Spirit of Mercy," *Florilegium* 13 (1994): 79–110. Wormald, *Making of English Law*, discusses Alfred's sources and use of Old Testament material in the prologue on 419–423. See also Allen J. Frantzen, *King Alfred*, Twayne's English Authors Series 425 (Boston: 1986), 14–15; Dammary, "The Law Code," vol. 1, 221–236.

79 Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 42.

80 "These are the laws which the almighty God was speaking to Moses..." Treschow, "The Prologue," 86. Stefan Jurasinski modifies Treschow's conclusions in "Violence, Penance, and Secular Law in Alfred's Mosaic Prologue," *Haskins Society Journal* 22 (2010): 25–42. While acknowledging Alfred's moves to incorporate both Germanic law and the tenets of

text with a large capital *P* on fol. 38b. Christ's arrival concludes Section 49, as He declares the fulfillment of the Old Law and teaches compassion and mercy. Then follows the translation of the so-called "Apostolic Letter" from Acts 15: 23–29, balancing the Old with the New Law and ending with the first statement of the Golden Rule (Liebermann's Section 49.5).⁸¹

The remaining parts of the prologue, much briefer in length, are likewise marked in the MS with space and large capitals. Alfred's first law, the Golden Rule, is directed at magistrates, with the message that if they consider it deeply, they need no other law books (Liebermann 49.6). They are further informed that, inspired by Christ's mercy, compensation may be assigned for first offenses excepting treachery to a lord (Liebermann 49.7); therefore, synods have been convened to draw up lists of compensations for a wide array of crimes (Liebermann 49.8). Space and another oversized capital mark Alfred's description of his law gathering and selection process, the resulting code of laws being one that his councillors approve and follow (Liebermann 49.9–10). Here, for the first time, writing in the first person, Alfred mentions himself—twice, first as King Alfred and then as Alfred, king of the West Saxons. In between, he recounts how he examined the codes of Ine (Wessex), Offa (Mercia), and Æthelberht (Kent) and took from them those laws he thought most just. This passage has created much discussion about Alfred's sources and methods, but E.G. Stanley has wisely pointed out that Alfred ruled the parts of England covered by those source codes.⁸² With an awareness of the challenges in governing three sets of people, each with their own cultural heritage, he forged a new set of laws incorporating some of their precepts with old and new laws of Wessex. In so doing, however, he still functioned as king of the West-Saxons, demonstrated by including the laws of Ine, even Ine's preface, in a special section following his own code.

IV Texts and Contexts

In the prologue Alfred lays out his procedure for developing laws that are culturally sensitive, reflective of past practice, and oriented toward the present

Exodus into the prologue, Jurasinski focuses upon statements regarding masters' treatment of their slaves that signal the influence of penitential materials on Alfred's thinking.

81 See Treschow, "The Prologue," 80–81 and Frantzen, *King Alfred*, 15. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze*, vol. 1, 42–46, prints all of the subsections of 49.

82 E.G. Stanley, "On the Laws of King Alfred: The End of the Preface and the Beginning of the Laws," *Alfred the Wise: Studies in Honour of Janet Bately on the Occasion of her Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Jane Roberts and Janet L. Nelson with Malcolm Godden (Cambridge: 1997), 211–221, at 212–213.

needs of governance. Given his statements there, it seems obvious that a king with such a highly developed regard for law and justice would devote much thought to his legislation.⁸³ Alfred did just that as he participated, at least indirectly, in intellectual conversations of the time. Beginning with Patrick Wormald, scholars have drawn attention especially to the writings of Hincmar of Reims and indicated how his ideas would have reached the king.⁸⁴ Hincmar understood that mankind was insufficiently capable of living by God's law or accepting His grace; therefore, society required secular legislation to regulate human behavior. Beyond these principles, Hincmar observed that such laws should respond flexibly to the needs of a people; that they should be widely known, especially by rulers; that they should include the laws of their predecessors; and that they should be written down. As Wormald sums up the relationship, Alfred's "*domboc* could almost be seen as a primer of Hincmarian principles."⁸⁵ Alfred's genius was to connect God's law with the laws of the English people, thereby justifying his method and royal authority as a legislator.

While Alfred's preface, in particular, was likely influenced by the principles of Archbishop Hincmar, a Frank, Alfred's laws were impacted indirectly by Frankish legislation, primarily through Æthelberht's Kentish code but possibly as well through Offa's decrees.⁸⁶ Offa's Mercian code does not survive in Old English, but this does not mean that his influence upon Alfred's laws is undetectable. Wormald believes that Offa's laws may exist as part of a report, in Latin, made by two papal legates, George of Ostia and Theophylact of Todi.⁸⁷ The *capitulare*, or list of legislative acts, quoted in the report dates from 786 (Offa died in 796) and was brought first to Northumbria for agreement and

83 Richard Abels, *Alfred the Great: War, Kingship, Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (London and New York: 1998), 246–248.

84 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 423–427. See also Pratt, *The Political Thought of King Alfred the Great*, 223–229.

85 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 425.

86 A possible exception to this assertion, had we Offa's code to examine, is the distinction between intentional and unintentional crimes informing *Alf* 13 and 36, which can be traced to a fifth-century Burgundian law, as shown by Carole Hough, "Penitential Literature and Secular Law," *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 11 (2000): 133–141, at 138. For a discussion of the relationship between Frankish and Kentish royal law, see Barbara Yorke, *Kings and Kingdoms of Early Anglo-Saxon England* (London: 1990), 39–41.

87 Wormald's fullest exposition of the evidence is in "In Search of King Offa's 'Law-Code,'" first published in *People and Places in Northern Europe, 500–1600: Studies Presented to P.H. Sawyer*, ed. I. Wood and N. Lund (Woodbridge: 1991), 25–45; updated in Patrick Wormald, *Legal Culture*, 201–223.

then south to Offa in Mercia. After signing the document, Offa could have issued its provisions to his people in some form or other (Offa's "lost" code) that eventually reached Alfred. Wormald argues that statements XV and XVI from the *capitulare*, in the form it now survives, link uniquely to Alfred's laws 8–8.2, both declaring that children of forbidden unions will be disinherited.⁸⁸ In Alfred's code, the focus is limited to nuns, but the relationship is clear nonetheless. Indeed, Alfred's preface traces the history of English law-giving to synods of church officials, who then published their decrees for circulation. Richard Dammary cites Alfred's use of the unique term *senoðbec* "synod books" (*Alf El* 49.8) to describe these sources as further evidence that he could have consulted a *capitulare* in the course of assembling his laws.⁸⁹

Traceable debts to Æthelberht's code are more extensive. Two rare Kentish legal terms appear in Alfred's laws: *cēas* "quarrel" (*Æbt* 18.1, *Alf* 18) and *ciricfrið* "right of sanctuary, penalty for breach of right of sanctuary" (*Æbt* 1, *Alf* 2.1).⁹⁰ Most important is the injury tariff that concludes Alfred's work and bridges to Ine's laws.⁹¹ A traditional feature of Frankish legislation designed to offer an alternative to the blood feud, the tariff specifies types of wounds and assigns monetary compensation to the victim.⁹² Alfred's list includes many of the same injuries as his Kentish model in similar head-to-toe order.⁹³ Items covering wounds to the stomach and loins appear in both tariffs, described in rare

88 Wormald, "In Search," 215–216.

89 Dammary, "The Law Code," vol. 1, 216; he expands upon links to Offa on 238–247.

90 Cited in Patrizia Lendinara, "The Kentish Laws," in *The Anglo-Saxons from the Migration Period to the Eighth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. John Hines, Studies in Historical Archaeology 2 (San Marino: 1977), 211–243, at 224. I have corrected the miscited *Æbt* citation for *cēas*. More possible influences of Æthelberht's legislation on Alfred are cited by Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 280, and Dammary, "The Law Code," vol. 1, 253–257.

91 Lisi Oliver, *The Beginnings of English Law* (Toronto: 2002), offers a fund of information on Æthelberht's injury tariff and its relationship to Alfred's, esp. 36–39.

92 On the origins of the injury tariff, see Patrick Wormald, "Exempla Romanorum: The Earliest English Legislation in Context," in *Rome and the North*, ed. Alvar Ellegård and Gunilla Åkerström-Hougen (Jonsered, Sweden: 1996), 14–27. For a discussion of the structure and contents, see Mary P. Richards, "The Body as Text in Early Anglo-Saxon Law," in *Naked Before God: Uncovering the Body in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Benjamin C. Withers and Jonathan Wilcox, Medieval European Studies 3 (Morgantown, WV: 2003), 97–115.

93 Curiously, the much-maligned rubricator of *Alfred-Ine* numbers the first four statements in the tariff regarding wounds to the head, the scalp, the ear, and the eye (40–43), but passes over thirty-four additional items (by Liebermann's numbering) until the next rubric for Ine's prologue (44). He must not have recognized the injury tariff, there being

vocabulary: *hrifwund* “wounded in the belly” (*Æbt* 61, *Alf* 61) and *purhþirel* “pierced through” (*Æbt* 61.1, 64.1, *Alf*. 67.2).⁹⁴ As customary, visible wounds receive higher compensation than those hidden from sight. On the other hand, Alfred updates Æthelberht’s compensation figures and covers some new injuries. Such changes are evident in a miscellaneous group (*Alf* 65–77) following the head-to-toe list, where wounds to the genitalia now appear, joined by new types of limb loss and other injuries caused by strong force.

Alfred’s treatment of the injury tariff offers unique insight into his handling of sources. He does not adopt Kentish or Mercian legislation wholesale, even when it carries the weight of tradition, but instead modifies and reorganizes it as he sees fit.⁹⁵ The handling of Ine’s West Saxon law code is, however, very different from those of Æthelberht and Offa. Alfred seems to have avoided drawing selectively from his kinsman’s legislation and may not have edited it at all, even when his own provisions superseded Ine’s. Instead, the *domboc* Chapter 44 announces Ine’s contribution and states clearly that Ine was king of the West-Saxons. Alfred seemingly did not intervene in Ine’s statements by, for example, substituting new fines, nor did he fold Ine’s provisions into his own. Rather, Alfred adjusted monetary penalties for similar offenses within his own code, augmented some of Ine’s laws, and added legislation on topics Ine did not cover. Alfred’s way of showing respect was to leave Ine’s laws standing on their own, representing the West Saxon legal tradition.

Ine, like Alfred, was influenced by earlier royal legislation, but that may have been limited to his Kentish contemporary, Wihtræd. Their surviving legal codes suggest that the two were aware of each other’s work.⁹⁶ Both codes make exclusive use of the term *hūslgenga* “communicant” (*Wi* 23 x2, *Ine* 59, 63).⁹⁷ Wihtræd’s statement 28 quotes Ine 64 exactly, the relative dates of the two indicating that Ine was the source. But whether Ine was acquainted with earlier Kentish laws, especially those of Æthelberht, and whether his code originally included an injury tariff, is unclear. It is interesting that Alfred’s tariff appears between his and Ine’s codes. Normally such tariffs appear within a code as they do with Æthelberht and earlier Merovingian law. In *Alfred-Ine* the

no such designation either in Alfred’s version or his source. For ease of reference, I use Liebermann’s numbering of statements in the injury tariff.

94 Lendinara, “Kentish Laws,” 223–224.

95 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 279.

96 Kentish influences on Ine’s legislation are discussed in H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, *Law and Legislation from Æthelberht to Magna Carta* (Edinburgh: 1966), 12–15.

97 Lendinara, “Kentish Laws,” 224. Lendinara follows Liebermann’s numbering for Ine’s laws, but I choose to use the rubric numbers because they remind us that *Alfred-Ine* was one code from the time of its earliest appearance in the manuscripts.

list could be interpreted as a shared traditional feature tying the two codes together. The list reacts to penalties for certain offenses stated in both West Saxon royal codes, including those for thievery requiring the loss of a hand or a foot and, from *Alf* 32, the loss of the tongue for public slander.⁹⁸ These condign penalties equate to injuries listed in the tariff, which treats damage to the eye, tongue, hand and foot in a single statement assigning identical compensation for each.⁹⁹ Although loss of an eye, hand (as a summary of the fingers) or foot all require equal monetary compensation in Æthelberht's list, the injuries are covered separately there, not as equivalent body parts.¹⁰⁰ By contrast, the West Saxon injury tariff takes note of the kinds of wounds that could be mistaken for criminal punishment and emphasizes their common worth. In this way the tariff truly does "bridge" the separate codes of Alfred and Ine.

Commentators on *Alfred-Ine* often stress the complementary relationship between the two series of laws. Since Ine's work does not survive as a separate document, however, it is hard to know what process Alfred and, presumably, his advisors followed in shaping the final joint project. In many ways, Ine's legislation has quite a different character from Alfred's, partly owing to its earlier date (688–694 at the latest).¹⁰¹ Liebermann's extensive commentary on the laws of Ine elucidates their relatively archaic content expressed in such terms as the king's "house" as opposed to Alfred's "hall."¹⁰² Ine's terms of compensation for crimes bespeak an earlier era, as do such linguistic features. On the other hand, if we view Ine as a contemporary of the Kentish king Wihtræd, the shape and focus of his legislation can be evaluated more appropriately.¹⁰³

Wihtræd's code is third in the line of extant Kentish royal legislation. His preface is more elaborate than those of his predecessors, indicating the date, place, names of council members, and the process followed to add decrees to

98 *Ine* 62 and 81, in reference to a *cirlisca mon* who is a convicted thief; *Alf* 6, hand only.

99 *Alf* 52 and 71 (Liebermann's numbering). In both of these statements, the value of the eye sets the standard of equivalency.

100 On the fingers, see Oliver, *Beginnings of English Law*, 99–101.

101 Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 103, n. 358. See further Yorke, *Kings and Kingdoms*, 138–139.

102 *Ine* 50, *Alf* 7. F. Liebermann, "Über die Gesetze Ines von Wessex," *Mélanges d'histoire offerts à M. Charles Bémont* (Paris: 1913), 21–42. Dammerly analyzes Ine's laws in "The Law Code," vol. 1, 258–276.

103 Patrick Wormald's article, "Inter Cetera Bona Gentis Suae: Law-Making and Peace-Keeping in the Earliest English Kingdoms," *Settimana di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull' alto Medioevo* 42 (Spoleto: 1995), 963–996; rpr. in Wormald, *Legal Culture*, 179–199, addresses the relationship between Ine's laws and the Kentish tradition, but focuses on Æthelberht rather than Wihtræd.

the laws of Kent. Notably, forms of the verb *ēcan* “to add, augment” are used here as in the earlier preface of kings Hlothere and Eadric to characterize the purpose of the new legislation. Like his preface, Wihtræd’s laws are clearly organized. The first group, 1–15, is ecclesiastical in orientation, stressing the Church’s immunity from taxation, condemning illicit unions and offerings to the devil, and ordering proper observance of fast days. Statements 16–24 deal with accusations and oaths related to clerics and laymen. The code concludes with four laws concerning thieves, including the last one adopted from Ine.

Although Ine’s prologue offers similar information about the process that led to its development, the initial directives are far more emphatic than Wihtræd’s. Ine states that the consultations to establish just decrees for the nation were undertaken

þætte nænig ealdormonna ne us undergeðeodedra æfter þam wære
awendende ðas ure domas. (*Ine Prol*)¹⁰⁴

Then, a two-part statement requiring “servants of God” to observe their proper rule and all citizens to obey the decrees of the nation opens the body of the code. *Ine* 46–49 focus on ecclesiastical matters, as does the first group from Wihtræd. In fact, *Ine* 47 is reminiscent of *Wihtræd* 9 and 11 regarding the issue of working on Sunday. However, in comparison with Wihtræd’s code, which gathered together laws on related topics, Ine’s legislation is repetitive and confusing. Laws on thievery provide the most striking example, where fully one-third of Ine’s code addresses theft in five separate chunks.¹⁰⁵ Agricultural matters, such as cattle dealing and animal damage to fences and hedges, are the subject of four groups of laws, and wergelds for different classes of men the subject of three. The resulting hodgepodge has led Wormald to theorize that Ine’s code is actually an accretion of laws issued at different times, as many as six sets.¹⁰⁶ As he points out, the first twenty-seven statements (*Ine* 44–71) reflect concerns of the type covered in Kentish legislation, but thereafter Ine returns to the same topics to cover additional contingencies, in what Wormald calls remedial legislation responding to cases as they arise. To sum up, there are structural similarities between Wihtræd’s and Ine’s prologues, and their laws cover some of the same topics, but Ine’s code does not appear to be a

104 “...so that none of the ealdormen or of our subjects might afterwards pervert these our decrees.” From the translation by Whitelock, *EHD*, 164.

105 Wormald, “*Inter Cetera Bona*,” 189–190.

106 Wormald, “*Inter Cetera Bona*,” 190–192.

revised, finished product. Rather, the West-Saxon legislation has been assembled in an additive fashion and deals as much with everyday nuisances as broader matters such as procedures for oaths following accusations. Was Alfred responsible for the state of Ine's code? The repetitive contents, plus the fact that he did not excise laws that contradicted his own, indicate that Alfred accepted Ine's legislation as he found it.

Alfred's opening statement sets a different tone from Ine's. In place of a command to obey the laws, Alfred enjoins his subjects to keep their oath and pledge. He follows this statement with the injunction to void any promise to betray one's lord or give aid to a wrongful undertaking, yet to fulfill all lawful pledges. Proving false to a lawful pledge requires forty days in prison and whatever punishment the bishop requires. Statements 1–4 as a group elaborate on the importance of keeping pledges, not plotting against one's lord, and respecting the role of the church. He insists upon allegiance to one's lord: statement 4.2 requires that anyone of any class who plots against the life of his lord shall forfeit his life and possessions to the king unless he is able to clear himself by an oath equal to his lord's wergeld. Alfred's law 42.5 allows a man to fight on behalf of his lord without fear of vendetta. But if a man fights on behalf of a relative who has been unjustly attacked, he is forbidden to do so against his lord (*Alf* 42.6). Within the code, Alfred also incorporates a major legal role for the church in providing sanctuary, protection and opportunity for confession and forgiveness to fugitives. *Alf* 33 shows Alfred's concerns operating together: if one man accuses another of not fulfilling pledges made under holy sanction, the accuser must make his charge in four churches and the accused, if he wishes to do so, must answer by oath in twelve churches.

In essence, Alfred's code asserts the primacy of the king, loyalty to one's lord, and, included but not limited to these, the duty to keep one's oath and pledge.¹⁰⁷ Writing of the king's special position as revealed in Alfred's laws, Loyn observes that he "was not above the law, but he was elevated above all other men below the law."¹⁰⁸ The society depicted there is rigidly structured, with harsh penalties for those who would controvert its principles. The king's person was privileged; offences such as fighting or even drawing a weapon in the king's hall could be punished with death. Legal protections in matters of surety, breach of peace, and forcible entry applied in descending order of scale to churchmen, nobles, and ordinary freemen. This orientation towards authority distinguishes Alfred from Ine, yet by no means tells the whole story. Topics

¹⁰⁷ Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 283–284.

¹⁰⁸ Loyn, *The Governance of Anglo-Saxon England*, 65–66. A similar assessment is made by Abels in *Alfred the Great*, 34–36 and 249–250.

covered thoroughly by Ine, such as theft, receive scant attention: Alfred contributes three statements (5.6, 6, 16) on penalties for stealing on Sundays and religious holidays, stealing from a church, and stealing a cow or broodmare, then driving away its foal or calf. On the other hand, whereas Ine has only two laws directly affecting women, *Ine* 75 on failed marital transactions (though not mentioning the bride) and 82 on maintenance for widows, Alfred's code has seven laws concerning offences to women, on topics ranging from abduction to murder of a pregnant woman, to adultery, physical mistreatment, and rape.¹⁰⁹

Complementary coverage suggests strongly that Alfred worked with Ine's code in mind, if not physically before him. Even when Alfred includes a similar law, as he does at least six times, he revises and expands the statement. Ine's law on sanctuary, *Ine* 48, addresses fugitives liable for the death penalty or flogging, whereas *Alf* 5–5.4 specifies how the seeker may reach sanctuary, how long he may stay, and under what conditions. Alfred's law includes a provision to move the fugitive to another building if the community needs its church, as long as the place has no more doors than the church. Alfred also adjusts fines and compensation for crimes addressed by Ine. For fighting in the house of individuals of higher rank than a freeman, the penalty specified in *Alf* 39.2 depends upon the man's wergeld, significantly more than the flat rate decreed in *Ine* 50. *Alf* 37 and *Ine* 83 both offer laws regarding a man who moves to a lord in another district. They contain a similar message, that a man may not do so without the permission of his current ealdorman, but with Ine, disobedience requires a fine of sixty shillings to his lord, whereas Alfred fines the new lord twice that sum, and more if there is an outstanding charge against the man. It appears that Alfred interpreted the act of accepting an unauthorized transfer as undermining the power of lordship.

Another significant feature of Alfred's legislation is its self-conscious commitment to writing. Within his code, Alfred includes an aside in 42.2 on sanctuary referring back to his longer statement in 5–5.4 *swa we ær bufan cwædon*.¹¹⁰ Scholars have also noted the particular, even peculiar, nature of some laws, which stand out as eccentric in the general disorganization of the code. Some of these are inordinately mundane, such as 23–23.2 on dog bites. Others such as giving a person a bad haircut (35.3) or cutting it in the style of a priest's (35.4,

109 See *Alf* 8, 9, 10, 11, 25, and 29; Barbara Yorke, *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages* (London: 1995), 280–281; and Mary P. Richards and B. Jane Stanfield, "Concepts of Anglo-Saxon Women in the Laws," in *New Readings on Women in Old English Literature*, ed. Helen Damico and Alexandra Hennessey Olsen (Bloomington, IN: 1990), 89–99.

110 "as we have stated above."

35.6) relate to personal appearance and possibly misrepresentation. And the details involved in determining culpability and possible fines for a person impaled on a spear carried over a man's shoulder (36–36.2) are a challenge to interpret. Wormald notes the *ad hoc* aspect of such laws, while Frantzen interprets them as an indication that they were intended as a written record of past judgments saved for future consultation.¹¹¹ These intimations of literacy may also help to explain why Alfred chose to include Ine's code after his own. The new code takes priority as the first law to be consulted, but Alfred also saw the need to offer the full range of West Saxon law. Joining the two implied a living tradition.

V Conclusion

An unresolved question that re-appears with each topic covered in this chapter involves the purpose behind the composition, preservation, and uses of *Alfred-Ine* throughout its manuscript history. The answer is not a simple one. After the lengthy philosophical prologue justifying the right and duty of a Christian king to become a law-giver, King Alfred assembled such a document with the advice of his councillors and the work of previous law-givers at hand. Whether he personally produced the code or instead supervised the production, he intended it as a repository of the best, most just law available at the time. He did not, as he had with his translation of Gregory's *Regula pastoralis*, give directions for circulating the laws. This suggests that Alfred did not necessarily envision active consultation of the legal compendium. Rather, the laws made a political statement about royal authority and the components of justice required for a stable nation. Their symbolic and inspirational value, as Wormald observed, mattered greatly, but they had practical value by emphasizing every man's obligations to God and king.¹¹²

Before long, however, the laws of Alfred and Ine took on the role of historical records in the Parker Manuscript and retained that identity for some fifty years. They also began to attract other legislation, which manuscript compilers seemed to view as ancillary to, or inspired by, the *domboc*. By the time another half-century had passed, *Alfred-Ine* had become associated with a range of Anglo-Saxon law codes in collections of texts, and it remained so through ever-expanding post-Conquest compendia, both in Old English and Latin. Meanwhile, the code's symbolic weight endured in references to *seo dumboc*,

111 Frantzen, *King Alfred*, 17–18.

112 Yorke, *Wessex*, 72.

leading one important author of royal legislation, Archbishop Wulfstan of York, to consult and use *Alfred-Ine* when producing legislation for two kings, Æthelred and Cnut. In their manuscript contexts, the physical format of the copies, their idealization as the foundation of English law, and their re-use in later legislation, the laws of Alfred and Ine embodied royal achievement and authority, the fulfillment of Alfred's aspirations.

PART 3

Alfrediana



The Old English *Orosius*

Janet M. Bately

“Her onginneð seo boc þe man Orosius nemneð.”¹ This rubric, giving a title for the book which is the subject of this chapter, is the work of an eleventh-century scribe. If there ever was an accompanying preface or explicit, or similar material attributing authorship, it has not survived. Why this Old English rendering of the *Historiarum adversus Paganos Libri Septem* of Paulus Orosius was undertaken, when, and by whom, we are not told, and we can only guess at the context, intellectual or physical, in which it was made. What right, then, has the book to be given space in a *Companion to King Alfred*? In this chapter I shall be considering the question of the work’s authorship and date (including the possibility of more than one person at work) and also examining the handling of the text, the nature of the additions and omissions made, the geographical and classical knowledge displayed, and aspects of language and style.

1 The Choice of Source Text

Written in the early fifth century at the request of Augustine, and much studied and copied in the Middle Ages, Orosius’ *Histories against the Pagans* was known in England from at least the late seventh century, its readers including Aldhelm, Bede, Asser and Byrhtferth.² A work covering world history from a Christian standpoint up to 418 A.D, with its concluding sections conveniently overlapping the opening chapters of Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis*

1 “Here begins the book that is called ‘Orosius.’” MS C (BL MS. Cotton Tiberius B.i., s.xi.¹) only, MS L (London, BL, Add. MS 47,967, s.x¹) no reading. For these MSS and a handful of fragments, see J.M. Bately, “The Relationship between the MSS of the Old English Orosius,” *ES* 48 (1967): 410–416; and *The Old English Orosius*, ed. Janet Bately, EETS SS 6 (London: 1980), xxiii–lv. In my footnotes I follow *DOE* in using the abbreviation *Or* to refer to the text, followed by page and line number. Emendations are normally silent.

2 249 manuscript copies and a number of extracts are still in existence: see Bately and D.J.A. Ross, “A Check List of Manuscripts of Orosius’ *Historiarum adversus Paganos Libri Septem*,” *Scriptorium* 15 (1961): 329–334, updated by Lars Boje Mortensen, “The Diffusion of Roman Histories in the Middle Ages,” *Filologia Mediolatina*, VI/VII (1999–2000), 101–200. For knowledge of the work in England see, e.g., Michael Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Library* (Oxford: 2006), 119, 237–239, and 323.

Anglorum for which it was a source, it might, if not already available, seem, as Dorothy Whitelock said of the *Bede*, a very likely candidate for inclusion in King Alfred's scheme for providing translations of those books "most necessary for all men to know."³ Indeed, according to the early twelfth-century historian William of Malmesbury, the *Orosius* was the work of the king.⁴

2 The Attribution of Authorship to King Alfred

We do not know what grounds William had for making this attribution. One possibility is that he was influenced by a passage in the Old English text, beginning, "Ohthere sæde his hlaforde, Ælfrede cyninge..."⁵ This passage was arousing modern scholarly interest already in the sixteenth century, with the antiquary Robert Recorde (*Whetstone of Witte*, 1557) referring to a report by "Ohthere that dwelt in Halgolande," and Sir Humfrey Gilbert (1576, using a now-lost translation by Lawrence Nowell, 1530–ca.1570), including in his *Discourse of a Discouerie for a New Passage to Cataia* ["Cathay"] (1576) "a Nauigation, which one *Ochther* made, in the time of kinge ALFRED, kinge of Westsexe."⁶ Subsequently, the text as a whole came to be referred to as "King Alfred's *Orosius*."⁷ However, since doubts were first raised by Josef Raith in 1951, ample evidence, syntactical, lexical, and stylistic, has been assembled to justify the conclusion that Alfred, as the person responsible for the four "literary" members of the Alfredian canon, was not also the translator of the *Historiae*.⁸

3 Dorothy Whitelock, "The Old English *Bede*," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 48 (1962), 57–90, at 61.

4 See *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxxiii.

5 "Ohthere said to his lord, King Alfred..." *Or* 13.29.

6 See further Derek S. Brewer, "Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century References to the Voyage of Ohthere," *Anglia* 71 (1952–53): 202–211.

7 See further Greg Waite, *Old English Prose Translations of King Alfred's Reign*, Annotated Bibliographies of Old and Middle English Literature 6 (Cambridge: 2000), 281–320.

8 Josef Raith, *Untersuchungen zum englischen Aspekt, I. Grundsätzliches Altenglisch* (Munich: 1951), 54–61. See further the articles by Elizabeth M. Liggins, "The Authorship of the *Old English Orosius*," *Anglia* 88 (1970): 289–322; and Bately, "King Alfred and the Old English Translation of *Orosius*," *Anglia* 88 (1970): 433–460. For the possibility that the *Domboc* itself, and not just the prefatory material to the Laws, might also have been written by Alfred himself, see Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century*. vol. 1 (Oxford: 1999), 271–277; and Mary Richards' chapter in this book. However, I am here dealing only with the four 'literary' texts, since for me, the case put by Wormald for Alfred's personal responsibility for the wording of the body of the Laws is not proven.

For example, parataxis is used more freely in the *Orosius*. Rhetorical devices are relatively rare, though while cases of irony in the *Boethius* and *Soliloquies* “always stem from the Latin,” those in the *Orosius* are additions to it.⁹ Moreover, significant differences in lexis are not confined to the choice of alternatives available for such everyday concepts as “to answer,” “to aid,” “guilt,” and “hatred,” but extend to the rendering of unfamiliar Latin terms.¹⁰ Thus in the *Orosius* we find Old English *ent* for “giant,” while the *Boethius*, along with the prose *Psalms*, uses the Latin loanword *gigant*.¹¹ In contrast, the *Boethius* has *upwita* for “philosopher,” *heretoga* for “consul,” and *Affricanas* for *Poeni*, whereas the *Orosius* has the loanwords *philosophus/filosofus*, *consul*, and *Pene*.¹² Again, although both *Orosius* and the texts generally attributed to Alfred are written in a form of West-Saxon including a number of words often associated with the Anglian dialect (as *carcern*, *hwilchwugu*, *in*, *nænig*, *snyttru*), there are also some linguistic features which, it has been argued, may point to their having originated in different areas.¹³

3 Single or Multiple Authorship?

As with the *Pastoral Care* and *Boethius*, the possibility of multiple authorship has been raised for the *Orosius*. In this case, there is indeed good reason to suppose that more than one individual contributed to the text as we now have it. That the contents-list was drawn up by someone not involved in the main task is suggested not only by a handful of linguistic differences, but also by

9 Liggins, “Authorship,” 317–318, following Ludwig Borinski, *Der Stil König Alfreds: Eine Studie zur Psychologie der Rede* (Leipzig: 1934), 40, 159, 193, 220–221.

10 Janet M. Bately, “King Alfred and the Old English Translation of *Orosius*.”

11 With one instance in *Psalms* glossed *ent*.

12 For *Orosius*’s heavier reliance on Latinate vocabulary, see further Nicole Guenther Discenza, “Writing the Mother Tongue in the Shadow of Babel,” in *Conceptualizing Multilingualism in England 800–1250*, ed. Elizabeth M. Tyler, *Studies in the Middle Ages* (Turnholt: 2011), 33–55; and (for *philosoph*) Janet Bately, “*Upwita/Philosophus* Revisited: A Reflection of Old English Usage,” in *Essays on Anglo-Saxon and Related Themes in Memory of Lynne Grundy*, ed. Jane Roberts and Janet Nelson, *King’s College London Medieval Studies* 17 (London: 2000), 15–36.

13 See Carolin Schreiber, *King Alfred’s Old English Translation of Pope Gregory the Great’s Regula Pastoralis and its Cultural Context* (Munich: 2002), 122–123; and, for the “reasonable working hypothesis” that the *Orosius* “represents to a first approximation of the late ninth-century dialect of Bristol,” see Peter Kitson, “The Dialect Position of the Old English *Orosius*,” *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia* 30 (1996): 3–35, at 28.

apparent ignorance of, and lack of interest in, what the corresponding part of the text actually contained.¹⁴ For instance, for Book V.xiiii, the chapter that announces the forthcoming birth of Christ, the list reads, “Hu Octauianus se casere betynde Ianes duru.”¹⁵ Similarly, in Book I.i, a chapter dealing with the geography of the known world, accounts of the voyages of the ninth-century seafarers, Ohthere and Wulfstan, not only have linguistic features differentiating them from the rest of the text, but also appear to have been inserted after its completion, very clumsily and by someone who lacked the author’s demonstrable ability to weave new material seamlessly into his translation. In this case a reference to “Northmen” as one of the peoples inhabiting Europe north of the Danube acted as trigger:

Orosius 13.27–18.4: [B]e westannorþan [Sweon] sindon Scridefinne 7 be westan Norþmenn. Ohthere sæde his hlaforde, Ælfrede cyninge, þæt he ealra Norðmonna norþmest bude...(16.21) Wulfstan sæde þæt he gefore of Hæðum...(18.3) Nu wille we secgan be suðan Donua þære ea ymbe Creca land, hu hit liþ.¹⁶

What then of the rest of the text?

3.1 *Arguments for Multiple Authorship of the Body of the Orosius*

A major proponent of multiple authorship has been Elizabeth Liggins. Having noted the “barer, flatter style” of the final book, VI, and “several peculiarities of grammatical construction,” which she felt provided quite strong evidence that its author “could not have been responsible for the earlier historical books,” she followed this hypothesis up with an examination, book by book, of the relative frequency of use of a range of constructions, concluding, “[g]ranted that the economy in the treatment of the subject matter in Book VI must have some

14 See *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxxxi–lxxxiii; for *OEHE*, see Dorothy Whitelock, “The List of Chapter-Headings in the Old English Bede,” in *Old English Studies in Honour of J.C. Pope*, ed. Robert B. Burling, and Edward B. Irving, Jr. (Toronto: 1974), 263–284.

15 “How the emperor Octavianus closed Janus’s door,” *Or* 6.18, *Or* 130. 25–131.21.

16 “To the north-west of the Swedes are the *Scride-Finns* [Lapps] and to their west Northmen [Norwegians]. Ohthere said to his lord, King Alfred, that he lived furthest north of all Northmen...Wulfstan said that he travelled from Hedeby...Now we will speak about the land of the Greeks, how it lies to the south of the river Danube.” See further Janet Bately, “Ohthere and Wulfstan in the Old English *Orosius*,” in *Ohthere’s Voyages: A Late 9th-Century Account of Voyages Along the Coasts of Norway and Denmark and its Cultural Context*, ed. Janet Bately and Anton Englert, Maritime Culture of the North 1 (Roskilde: 2007), 18–58, at 32–33.

effect on the style, it is hard to believe that the variations of linguistic choice and the change of style do not indicate a change of authorial hand there.”¹⁷

The findings of Liggins’s two papers, along with my response to the first,¹⁸ have since been subjected to scrutiny by Sakari Louhivaara, with a statistical analysis of post-verbal constituents. Louhivaara begins her paper by pointing out the difficulties and dangers of using statistical evidence in a discussion of disputed authorship: “(1) Is the length of the text sufficient to provide the researcher with reliable data? (2) Does a statistically significant difference automatically imply linguistic significance?”—and in her conclusion, she notes amongst other things the apparent “considerable continuity from one Book [of the *Orosius*] to the next,” which “would seem to be in agreement with Bately, who argues for a steady development in one and the same translator’s style.”¹⁹ However, the results of her analysis, she says, “lend support to Liggins... Their cumulative effect suggests a significant linguistic difference between Books VI and V on the one hand and the rest of *Or* on the other,” and she concludes that she “would claim that a different translator for Book VI cannot be ruled out.”²⁰

There is no questioning the figures produced by Liggins’ and Louhivaara’s careful analyses. However, I would argue that to interpret them it is necessary to take account the variations in context and opportunity that have resulted from the discarding—arguably by the translator himself—of a large amount of the material provided by the Latin original.²¹

3.1.1 Variations in Linguistic Usage and the Reshaped Text

Instead of Paulus Orosius’ seven books, consisting of one prologue, two prefaces and one hundred and seventy-five chapters, we have six books and ninety-nine chapters. Books V and VI of the Latin now form an undivided Book V, and Latin Book VII becomes the new Book VI (though ms L, at this point retains the original numbering, announcing, “Her endað sio sixte boc, 7 onginð seo

17 Liggins, “Authorship,” 322, and see also Liggins, “Syntax and Style in the Old English *Orosius*,” in *Studies in Earlier Old English Prose*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: 1986), 245–273, at 268. See also “Syntax,” 265–266, referring to a “stronger preference” for one feature, a “higher incidence” of a second, but “less use” of a third.

18 *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxxv–lxxxi.

19 Sakari Louhivaara, “Multiple Authorship of the OE *Orosius*,” *English Historical Linguistics 1992: Papers from the 7th International Conference on English Historical Linguistics, Valencia, 22–26 September 1992: Current Issues in Linguistic Theory* 113, ed. Francisco Fernandez, Miguel Fuster and Juan Jose Calvo (Amsterdam: 1994), 343–352, at 343.

20 Louhivaara, “Multiple Authorship,” 343 and 351.

21 That the Latin text behind the translation might already have suffered significant cuts and modifications cannot of course be ruled out.

siofoðe").²² In the *Historiae*, Books I and II are the shortest and roughly the same length, but subsequent books become progressively longer. Book VII is more than twice as long as Book I. In the Old English version, in contrast, the estimated lengths are, in ascending order, Book II, seventeen and a half pages, new Book V, nineteen and a half pages, new Book VI, twenty-four pages, Book I, twenty-seven pages (with the geographical and historical sections approximately thirteen and fourteen pages respectively), and finally Books III and IV, each an approximate thirty pages.²³ One result is a dramatic reshaping of the Old English text.

Now in the case of *Orosius* Book VI, frequent use of précis rather than paraphrase in its rendering of *Historiae* Book VII has certainly contributed to what Liggins describes as a "generally terser style, in which the elements of elaboration and of speculation are reduced," resulting in a significant reduction in both the average number of clauses in sentences, and the percentage of subordinate clauses per sentence in this part of the text.²⁴ This book, she observes, makes "comparatively less use of relative clauses than the other books do, and also rather less use of concessives and of defining clauses," while the incidence of correlation "falls away."²⁵ However, heavy cuts have also been made to *Historiae* Books V and VI, reducing the former to approximately eleven and a half pages of the new Book V of the *Orosius* and the latter to a mere eight pages. At the point where they are merged, the Old English author, faced with the *Historiae* Book V's lengthy account of the numerous conflicts and civil wars in the last years of the Roman Republic, keeps no more than a handful of details, before moving on directly to *Historiae*, Book VI. ii, and Pompey's defeat of Mithridates:

Orosius 125.11–15: Raðe þæs ealle þa consulas wæron deade buton twæm. Marius 7 Silla geforan him self, 7 Cinna wæs ofslagen on Smyrna, Asia byrg, 7 Sertorius wæs ofslagen on Ispania. Þa underfeng Pompeius Partha gewin, for þon Metreþatis heora cyning teah him to þa læssan Asiam 7 eall Creca lond.²⁶

22 Or 132.22–23, "Here ends the sixth book, and begins the seventh." See *Historiarum adversum Paganos Libri Septem*, ed. Carolus Zangemeister (Vienna: 1882), 430, "explicit liber sextus. incipit...liber septimus." MS C reads correctly ".v." and ".vi." See also 132.24, MS L again "seventh book" (MS C "vi.).

23 Liggins's estimates ("Syntax," 260).

24 Liggins, "Syntax," 251 and 265.

25 Liggins, "Syntax," 251 and 253. See further 265–266, and Louhivaara, "Multiple Authorship," section 2.

26 "Shortly after this, all the consuls were dead save two. Marius and Sulla died natural deaths, and Cinna was slain in Smyrna, a town in Asia, and Sertorius was slain in Spain.

A likely explanation for the reduction of the last three books of the *Historiae* to two would appear to be not a change of author but reduced interest on the part of the translator in the material provided by these books. Nevertheless, regardless of the extensive cuts, additions, and alterations made to the Latin text, which greatly distort the work's original proportions, the result remains first and foremost translation-based, with the Old English providing, as it were, the "top layer," superimposed on the Latin text, and so to a very large extent reflecting its linguistic choices. To be fully valid, therefore, any linguistic or stylistic analysis has to take Orosius' *Historiae* as its starting point, not merely considering what Liggins refers to as the "possibility of Latin influence,"²⁷ but also seeing the *Historiae* as exercising major control over content, and asking not only "what" the translator has done with the source text and "where," but also "why," and "when," and "how." Finally, the figures for the two parts of Book V need to be considered separately, and the usage of the second part compared with that for Book VI. It was, after all, seven books, not six, that lay in front of the translator. It is against this background that Louhivaara's questioning of whether a statistically significant difference automatically implies linguistic significance has to be addressed.²⁸

3.1.2 Syntax²⁹

3.1.2.1 *Old English Passives: Combinations of Auxiliary Verb and Past Participle*

Liggins, examining the order of the elements in passive constructions with auxiliary verb and past participle, finds evidence that differentiates Book VI from the rest of the *Orosius*.

With the *beon/wesan* and *weorpan* forms both word orders are found regularly in principal clauses, though in the historical sections as a whole the auxiliary precedes the past participle in about 78 percent of the occurrences. The degree of preference varies from book to book, with an obvious change between V and VI.³⁰

Then Pompey undertook the Parthian War, because Mithridates their king had taken to himself Lesser Asia and all the land of the Greeks." Incorporating material from *OH V*. xix.24 through to VI.ii.

27 "Authorship," 317.

28 For Liggins' arguments against differences within Book III being indicative of a change of author, see "Syntax," 266–268.

29 Problems of space prevent me from providing a complete breakdown of figures in this section, or replying to more than three of the claims for possible multiple authorship made by Liggins and Louhivaara.

30 Liggins, "Syntax," 260.

However, the distribution patterns in Book V, parts 1 and 2—corresponding to *Historiae*, Books V and VI respectively—differ from those for the pair combined, while for all the books, whether or not we subdivide them, it is necessary also to allow for the extent to which context is responsible for the numbers of occurrences.³¹ Thus, for example, two terms which (following the *Historiae*) appear very frequently in the *Orosius* are “to cause to flee, put to flight” (OE *a-* or (*ge*)-*flieman*), and “to slaughter, slay” (OE *for-*, *of-* or *ge-slean*). The emphasis in the narrative is, however, mainly on the doer, not the done-by, and as a result the number of passive forms of these verbs in principal clauses is not only considerably smaller than that of active ones, but they are not evenly distributed throughout the six books. The combination past participle *gefliemed* with *beon/wesan* or *weorþan*, for instance, is found almost exclusively in Books IV and V, while the highest concentrations of *geslagen* are in Books III and IV.

What is more, an analysis of all the combinations of *beon/wesan/weorþan* and past participle in the *Orosius* certainly produces different figures in different Books for the numbers of occurrences in principal clauses. However, subdividing them into main and coordinate clauses reveals instead a striking similarity of usage between them. The order in main clauses in the two parts of Book V, for example, is invariably auxiliary followed by past participle. In coordinate clauses introduced by “and” and “ac,” on the other hand, instances fall into two groups. Here, with a few exceptions, we find (i) subject expressed, order auxiliary followed by past participle, and (ii) subject not expressed, order past participle followed by auxiliary—a state of affairs which is repeated in all the other Books. Indeed, rather than demonstrating authorial preference for one particular word-order generally over another, what the distribution patterns reflect is the frequency with which terms like “put to flight” and “slain” are used, how often they occur in either a main or a coordinate clause, and whether or not the coordinate clause contains a subject.

3.1.2.2 *Sentence-Initial Main Clauses Beginning with an Adverbial*

Of sentence-initial main clauses that begin with an adverbial, in which the subject-verb order is either direct or inverted, Louhivaara observes that “Book VI stands out from the others by its preference for the sv order.”³² Indeed, her figures, presented in percentages, show a steady increase in the frequency of

31 In this context see Louhivaara, “Multiple Authorship,” 351: “where each Book was divided in two, the results on the second part of each Book were similar to those on the first part of the next Book.”

32 Louhivaara, “Multiple Authorship,” 346–347, following a comment that “inversion after *þa*, ‘then’, is the rule but after prepositional phrases both sv and vs occur.”

constructions with direct order, from Books I–IV, via Book V, to Book VI. However, different patterns emerge if, for instance, we analyse separately the usage of principal clauses that are introduced by adverbial *æfter þæm* and those that are not. Thus, an examination of principal clauses introduced by *æfter ðæm* reveals a marked preference in all six Books for direct order (Liggins's figures are 119: 23 instances), whereas in "about half" of the just over two hundred instances introduced by other prepositional phrases, not only does the verb precede the subject, but there is also a split between the first three and last three books, the former with a "strong preference" for inverted order, the latter "some preference" for direct order.³³ The differences are striking, revealing the dangers of what might be called blanket statistics.

Equal care is needed in the interpretation of another group of sentences that open with the "time-formulas" *on* plus dative case of *tīd*, *gear* or *dæg*, where, as Liggins reports, "only three of the eighteen phrases of this type in Ib, II, and the first part of III (sections i–vii) have Direct Order, but it is the prevailing one in the later part of III and in IV, V, and VI."³⁴ However, the three constructions occur in different numbers, with the two word-orders in different proportions in different Books, and these differences are capable of a variety of explanations. So, for instance, ten of the fourteen instances of *on þæm...geare* in Book VI correspond to imperial regnal years in the Latin text. To interpret these figures, it is thus again necessary to consider the context in which the sentences occur and the identity of the phrases that introduce them. As the number of occurrences of each of these phrases is largely predetermined by the wording of the *Orosius*' Latin source, what the overall proportions may be is as a result irrelevant to the subject of authorship.

3.1.3 Orthography

Since the surviving manuscripts of the *Orosius* are some removes from the "original," any conclusions we draw from their spellings must of necessity be speculative. We cannot be sure which particular forms are authorial and which were subsequently introduced by copyists. Scribal error, however, seems a plausible explanation for the extraordinary range of alternative spellings for a number of the *Historiae*'s more unusual proper names.³⁵ Some of these spellings may well already have been present in the Latin text immediately behind the translation, as is suggested by readings such as *Rochobascorum*, *Thelenus*

33 Liggins, "Syntax," 257–258 and 256.

34 Liggins, "Syntax," 256–257.

35 Note also loanwords *palistas* (1x) and *tictator* (6x) and see Janet M. Bately, "The Old English Orosius: The Question of Dictation," *Anglia* 84 (1966): 255–304, at 274.

and *Thelscises* for the *Rhobascorum*, *Mytilenaeus*, *Telchises* of the *Historiae*, and the *Rochouasco*, *Thelenus*, *Thelescises* of the *Orosius*.³⁶

Not all the variants recorded in the *Orosius*, however, have their equivalents in these Latin manuscripts, while a number of them have long been considered the result of dictation of the Old English text. For Pogatscher, for instance, ms L's particularly common use of the symbols $\bar{d}$ and $\bar{p}$ for Greek δ and Latin *d* is probably to be explained as "die Nachschrift eines Diktat," reflecting the pronunciation of Latin intervocalic *t* and *d* as $[\bar{d}]$ in neighbouring Francia.³⁷ Similarly, for Bøgholm, "unintentional changes" may have been made by a scribe taking dictation from "a man of Romance culture."³⁸ My own view is that larger proportion of the more significant types of spelling-change can be explained in terms of Old Welsh phonology and scribal practice than that of either Romance languages or Old Low and High German, including the substitution of $\bar{p}$ or $\bar{d}$ for a wider range of dentals than Latin intervocalic *d*.³⁹ However, the freedom with which the Latin source is rendered in the Old English version, and the textual history of the surviving manuscripts of the latter, together rule out any reasonable hope of uncovering in the body of the text significant numbers of instances of the types of "slips of the ear" that are commonly taken as indicators of dictation.⁴⁰ Indeed, recently, Paul Russell concluded that "The balance of evidence [drawn from a study of the spelling of proper names] makes it difficult to argue that the Old English text was dictated, although it is highly likely that dictation was involved at some stage in the transmission of

36 See further Janet M. Batley, "King Alfred and the Latin mss. of Orosius' History," *Classica et Mediaevalia* 22 (1961): 69–105, at 80–96; and variants in *OH*, ed. Zangemeister (or, with a slightly different selection, *Orose: Histoires contre les Païens*, ed. Marie-Pierre Arnaud-Lindet, 2nd ed., 3 vols [Paris: 2003]).

37 Alois Pogatscher, *Zur Lautlehre der Griechischen, Lateinischen und Romanischen Lehnworte im Altenglischen* (Strassburg: 1888), 177 and 176.

38 N. Bøgholm, *English Speech from an Historical Point of View* (Copenhagen: 1939), 19; similarly Ann Kirkman, "Proper Names in the OE Orosius," *Modern Language Review* 25 (1930): 1–22, 140–151.

39 Janet Batley, "The Old English *Orosius*: The Question of Dictation," at 261. For Old Welsh phonology, see Kenneth Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain* (Edinburgh: 1953). For a possible Cornish dictator, see Andrew Breeze, "Cornwall and the Authorship of the Old English *Orosius*," *Notes and Queries* 38 (1991): 152–154; and Kitson, "Dialect Position." For the study of *Orosius* in Wales, see Michael Lapidge, "Asser's Reading," *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences*, ed. Timothy Reuter (Aldershot: 2003), 27–47, at 41–43.

40 For a useful bibliography see Paul Russell, "Revisiting the 'Welsh Dictator' of the Old English *Orosius*," *Quaestio Insularis* 12 (2011): 31–62, at 35, note 9.

the Latin version.”⁴¹ In particular he argues that “changed” spellings of consonants are neither evenly distributed, nor found in sufficient numbers compared with their “unchanged” counterparts to be significant. As for theories of dictation by a Welshman, “If no dictator was involved in the Old English, we can say nothing about his native language.”⁴²

Professor Russell’s statistics, from which he draws his conclusions, are based on the numbers of names under discussion, not of individual occurrences, and, though separating initial from intervocalic consonants, do not, in the case of the latter, take into consideration the position which they hold in each name. However, as I argue in detail elsewhere, if we extend our analysis to include the number of instances of ‘changed’ and ‘unchanged’ names, and examine the positions in them of the spellings in question, not only does the case for dictation remain strong, but so does the case for intervention at some stage of the transmission of at least parts of the completed text, not by a man of “Romance culture,” but by an unknown Welshman to a scribe with an Anglo-Saxon background.⁴³ The spellings involved being scattered throughout the six Books, there is nothing in their distribution to suggest more than one author at work.

3.1.4 Lexis

I have found nothing in the distribution patterns and choice of lexical items to suggest a clean break, and thus potential change of authorship, between the end of Book V and the beginning of Book VI. In my opinion, therefore, since linguistic studies have so far produced no convincing reasons for dividing up the *Orosius* as whole, the interpolated section on Ohthere and Wulfstan apart, it would seem reasonable to assume single authorship for the body of the *Orosius* and move on to look for indications as to the kind of person who might have been responsible.

4 A Radical Transformer

The *Orosius* is the result of a reshaping of its primary Latin source, a transformation,⁴⁴ and its relationship to the *Historiae* is a complex one. Not only is

41 Russell, “Revisiting the ‘Welsh Dictator,’” 57–58 and 41–48.

42 Russell, “Revisiting the ‘Welsh Dictator,’” 58.

43 Janet Bately, “Numbers and Patterns: The Spelling of the Proper Names in the OE *Orosius*,” forthcoming.

44 For this term, see Janet M. Bately, *The Literary Prose of King Alfred’s Reign: Translation or Transformation*, Inaugural Lecture, King’s College London (London: 1980), repr. *Old*

close translation regularly replaced by paraphrase and rewriting, but along with the extensive cuts mentioned above, extensive additions have been made throughout. The *Orosius*, it would seem, was the work of someone of independent mind, prepared to put his own stamp on the work of a Church Father that Dante centuries later was to place among the blessed in his Heaven. However, that is not all that the text of the Old English tells us about him.

4.1 *Cuts, Additions, and other Modifications*

Cuts greatly outnumber additions and are made not only to historical detail but also to the passages of Christian *apologia* that take up so much of the Latin text. Gone is the bulk of the sections of comment that frame the seven books, while material elsewhere is dropped or shortened.⁴⁵ The Latin author's original brief was to demonstrate that calamities, disasters and wicked deeds of all kinds had been happening ever since the transgression of the first man and would continue to happen. Using history, Paulus Orosius was to answer those *pagani* who were complaining that times were now far worse than in the past, because of belief in Christ and worship of God, at the expense of idols.⁴⁶

The primary interest of the Anglo-Saxon author, in contrast, would appear to be in past actions and events, regardless of their nature. Through his careful selection and rearrangement of material from the *Historiae*, both the tone and the thrust of the work are transformed, from an exercise in polemic to a more or less straightforward survey of world history, though still from a Christian standpoint.⁴⁷ The focal point of the Old English text becomes not the sack of Rome by the Goths—no longer a “burning issue” by Alfred's time⁴⁸—but the birth of Christ, which is now seen as bringing with it an undeniable improvement in man's lot. At the same time, the translator does not hesitate to put words into his source-author's mouth. The following comparison between the personal comments at the end of the *Historiae* Book VI and beginning and end

English Prose: Basic Readings, ed. Paul E. Szarmach, with Deborah A. Oosterhouse (New York: 2000), 3–27.

45 See, e.g., *OH* IV. xxi, with §§5–9 reduced to a single sentence in *Orosius*.

46 See, e.g., *OH* I. prologue and passim. For the extent to which Paulus Orosius carried out his brief, see *Orose*, ed. Arnaud-Lindet, I. xx–xxv.

47 See further Dorothy Whitelock, “The Prose of Alfred's Reign,” *Continuations and Beginnings: Studies in Old English Literature*, ed. Eric Gerald Stanley (London: 1966), 67–103, at 89–90; *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, xciii–c; and 157–339, passim. Pace Godden, “The *OE Orosius* and its Sources,” *Anglia* 129 (2011): 297–320, at 319, that is not to imply that he—or indeed a glossator of the Latin—was not “interested in producing a lively and effective series of stories from ancient history.”

48 Whitelock, “Prose,” 90.

of Book VII on the one hand, and those in the corresponding sections of the *Orosius* Books V and VI on the other, may serve by way of illustration.

4.1.1 “Said Orosius”

In the *Historiae*, after an account of events in the forty-second year of the reign of Augustus that include the birth of Christ and the Roman census, Book VI ends with a reference to the persecutions of Christians and subsequent retributions:

Historiae VI.xxii.11: [Q]uoniam ab initio peccare homines et puniri propter peccata non tacui, nunc quoque, quae persecutiones Christianorum actae sint, et quae ultiones secutae sint, absque eo quod omnes ad peccandum generaliter proni sunt atque ideo singillatim corripuntur, expediam.⁴⁹

The corresponding section of the Old English is very different. Following a much curtailed rendering of *Historiae* VI.xxii.1–8, and the simple statement, “þa wearð geboren se þe þa sibbe brohte eallre worolde, þæt is ure Dryhten Hælende Crist,” Book V concludes:⁵⁰

Nu ic hæbbe gesæd, cwæð Orosius, from frympe þisses middangeardes hu eall moncyn angeald þæs ærestan monnes synna mid miclum teonum 7 witum, nu ic wille eac forþ gesecgan hwelc mildsung 7 hwelc geþwærnes wæs siþþan se cristendom wæs, gelicost þæm þe monna heortan awende wurden, for þon þe þa ærran þing agoldene wæron.⁵¹

In its turn, the final book of the Old English version begins with a statement by “Orosius” that he intends next to discuss the four great empires, Assyrian, Macedonian, African (that is to say, Carthaginian) and Roman. Upon which,

49 “Since from the start I have not been silent about the fact that men sin and are punished on account of their sins, now I shall also set out what persecutions of Christians have been carried out and what retributions have followed, apart from the fact that all people in general are prone to sin and are therefore individually reprov’d.”

50 *Or* 132.15–16: “then he was born who brought peace to all the world, that is our Lord [and] Saviour Christ.”

51 *Or*. 132. 17–23: “Now I have recounted, said Orosius, from the beginning of this world, how all mankind has paid for the first man’s sins with great injuries and punishments, now I intend also to set forth what mercy and what concord there has been since the advent of Christianity, most like as though the hearts of men had become changed, because the previous things had been paid for.”

the translator jumps straight to what in the Latin is Book VII.ii—incidentally cutting out all that part in which the real Paulus Orosius, to make it clearer that God is the ruler of all ages, kingdoms, and places, has recourse to numerology, using occurrences of the numbers seven, fourteen and forty-two.⁵²

Again, at the very end of the work, the two versions radically disagree. In the Latin, Paulus Orosius concludes by summarising the trials and tribulations of the past, but briefly distinguishing Christian times because of the growing presence of Christ's grace.⁵³ Not so the Old English version. Having devoted a couple of sentences to the arrival on the scene of the Goths,⁵⁴ but otherwise omitting the greater part of *Historiae* VII. xxxvii, the Anglo-Saxon author makes Orosius turn on the Romans:

Orosius 156.1–6: Nugiet eow Romane mæg gescomian, cwæð Orosius, þæt ge swa heanlic gepoht sceoldon on eow geniman for anes monnes ege 7 for anes monnes geblote, þæt ge sædon þæt þa hæðnan tida wæron beteran þonne þa cristnan, 7 eac þæt eow selfum wære betere þæt ge eowerne cristendom forleten 7 to þæm hæðeniscan þeawum fenge þe eowre ieldran ær beeodon.⁵⁵

and, skipping for its date-line to *Historiae* VII.xl, the very brief final chapter begins with the assertion that, in allowing the Goths to sack Rome, God was bestowing his mercy on the Romans, the explanation for this being that it was Alaric, the Christian and most mild king, who was permitted by God to take vengeance on their misdeeds.

The above passages are of course not the only places where speech has been invented in Orosius' name.⁵⁶ On a number of occasions, the device is used to distance what Paulus Orosius is purportedly saying from what might not be appropriate comment in his own time, stressing (as in the quotation above), that it is "you Romans" that "Orosius" is criticising for complaining. Thus, for instance,

52 *OH* VII.ii. 8–15.

53 *OH* VII.xliii.19.

54 *Or* 155.22–29; *OH* VII.xxxvii.2–5.

55 "It may yet cause you shame, Romans, said Orosius, that you should have taken upon yourselves so disgraceful a thought for fear of one man and one man's offerings of sacrifices, that you said that the heathen times were better than the Christian, and also that it were better for yourselves that you should abandon your Christian faith and take to the heathen customs that your ancestors previously practised."

56 The words "said Orosius" occur forty-six times in the body of the text.

Orosius 31.2–5: Hu ungemetlice ge Romware bemurciað 7 besprecað þæt eow nu wyrð sie on þiosan cristendome þonne þæm þeodum þa wære, for þon þa Gotan eow hwon oferhergedon 7 iowre burg abraecon 7 iower feawe ofslogon.⁵⁷

Nevertheless, at the same time, the rewriter of the *Historiae* is happy, on occasion, to use the authority of Orosius' name to commend pagan bravery and heroism:⁵⁸

Orosius 102.34–103.7: Hu magon nu Romane, cwæð Orosius, to soþe gesecgean þæt hie þa hæfdon beteran tida þonne hie nu hæbben, þa hie swa monega gewin hæfdon emdenes underfongen?...Ac þæt wæs swiðe sweotol þæt hie þa wæron beteran þegnas þonne hie nu sien, þæt hie þeh þæs gewinnes geswican noldon, ac hie oft gebidon on lytlum stapole 7 on unwenlicum, þæt hie þa æt nihstan hæfdon ealra þara anwald þe ær neh heora hæfdon.⁵⁹

The “I” of the corresponding passage of the Latin (*Historiae* IV.xvi.18–21) concentrates on the “inprobam miseriam uel miseram improbitatem” (“shameless wretchedness or wretched shamelessness”) of the Romans, while admitting that men were braver for their miseries:

OH IV.xvi.21: Et tamen fortis in alterutrum desperatio in meliora profecit, nam in his omnibus desperando pugnarunt, pugnando uicerunt. Ex quo euidenter ostenditur non tempora tunc fuisse tranquilliora otiis, sed homines miseriis fortiores.⁶⁰

57 “How excessively you Romans grumble and complain that it is now worse for you in this Christian era than it was for those nations then, because the Goths have ravaged you somewhat and destroyed your city and slain a few of you.” No equivalent *OH* I.xvi.

58 See, e.g., Whitelock, “Prose,” 92–93, *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, xcix–c, and for an emphasis on the deeds of individuals and teaching by example, William A. Kretzschmar, Jr., “Adaptation and *anweald* in the Old English *Orosius*,” *ASE* 16 (1986): 127–145.

59 “How, said Orosius, can the Romans now say as a truth that they then had better times than they now have, when they had undertaken simultaneously so many battles?...But that was very clear that they were better warriors (‘thegns’) than they now are, in that they nevertheless were not prepared to cease from the battle, but they often remained in a small and hopeless position, so that they finally had authority over all those that previously nearly had it over them.”

60 “And yet strong desperation toward one another led to better things, for in all these [wars] in desperation they fought, and by fighting they conquered. From this it is clearly shown

5 The Author's Geographical and Classical Additions

At the same time as cutting or rewriting—sometimes producing what is sometimes little more than a précis of the information provided by his source—the translator has made numerous additions to the text. One of the most surprising things about these additions is the impressive amount of knowledge, both geographical and classical, that lies behind them. Some of the new material is incorrect and some is misapplied, while on a number of occasions the translator seems to have felt free to exercise his own imagination. However, most of these new details have clearly been derived from some source or combination of sources other than the *Historiae*.⁶¹ The number of possibilities is considerable, the two big questions now being not “why?” and “when?” but “which?” and “how?”⁶²

5.1 *The Author's Geographical Knowledge*

Geographical information not present in the base text of the *Historiae* falls roughly into three types: running alterations or explanatory additions, contemporary identifications, and major rewriting. Examples of the first kind are the naming of that part of the river Nile that flows from the great inland sea through “Æthiopica westenne” (*Historiae*, *Aethiopica deserta*) as *Ion* (i.e. *Gihon*).⁶³ The second kind includes the equating of the *Hiliricos* (the *Illirii*, “Illyrians,” of the *Historiae*, common manuscript variant *Illirici*) with the *Pulgar* (Old High German *Pulgar*, “Bulgarians”), or (incorrectly) of *Carthago Nova* (present-day Cartagena) with the town “that is now called *Cordofa*.”⁶⁴ The third kind is represented by the reworkings in the chapter on world geography of the accounts of the different areas of continental Europe. In this chapter, following the vastly expanded account of Europe north of the Danube, a region of which, writing at the opening of the fifth century, Paulus Orosius, like his contemporaries in the Roman Empire, knew very little indeed, descriptions of

not that those times were more tranquil for leisures, but that men were stronger for their miseries.”

61 For the heroic entering online of details of all the possible sources named in my edition, with bibliography, see Rohini Jayatilaka's entry “The Sources of Orosius, *History against the Pagans* (Cameron C.B.9.2),” *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici*.

62 Once again we do not know what additional material may have been already present in the Latin text. For some variant readings and glosses in surviving MSS of the *Historiae*, see, e.g., Bately, “King Alfred and the Latin MSS. of Orosius' History,” and Godden, “The OE *Orosius* and its Sources,” 312–313.

63 Or 11.11. See further OE *Orosius*, ed. Bately, 163.

64 Or 61.23, OH III.xii.5 (see further OE *Orosius*, ed. Bately, 253), and Or 104.29–30, OH IV.xviii.1.

Europe both east and west of that river have been rearranged. In its section on eastern Europe, the Latin deals with five Roman provinces, separately and in turn, and then moves on to the group Pannonia, Noricum and Raetia. In the Old English version, however, information is grouped round three centres of relevance in the ninth and early tenth century: Constantinople, Dalmatia, and Istria. Then when the Latin turns to western Europe, its account is rewritten to produce a fairly accurate description of the divisions at that time of the area that was later to be called France, this time taking as its centres *Gallia Bellica*, *Æquitania*, *Narbonense*, and *Profentse*.⁶⁵

5.1.1 Sources of the Geographical Additions

Positive identification of a specific Latin source immediately or ultimately behind individual pieces of additional geographical detail in the body of the text is impossible, partly because these are not only in the vernacular but are often composed of no more than one or two words, and partly because of the variety of texts providing such information that were produced in western Europe in the early Middle Ages.⁶⁶ That the river Nile forms the boundary of Egypt and Africa, for instance, is a piece of information given by Pomponius Mela, Solinus and Bede, while possible sources for the statement that the river *Danaïs* (Latin *Tanais*), boundary between Europe and Asia, passes to the west of Alexander's altars include Solinus and Martianus Capella, who locate these in Asia.⁶⁷

5.2 *The Historical Additions*⁶⁸

One notable group of additions to the *Historiae* takes the form of the insertion of details from famous episodes from Roman history—stories such as the

65 *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxvii–lxx and 203–205; Bately, “Ohthere and Wulfstan,” 22–26.

66 See, e.g., Janet M. Bately, “The Relationship between Geographical Information in the Old English Orosius and Latin Texts other than Orosius,” *ASE* 1 (1972): 45–62, passim, and *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxiii–lxx and commentary; also Ian Wood, “Early Medieval Accounts of the North before the Old English Orosius,” in *Ohthere's Voyages*, ed. Bately and Englert, 60–61; and Ian Wood and George Indruszewski, “An Eighth-century Written Source on Ships and Navigation: The *Cosmography of Aethicus Ister*,” *Wulfstan's Voyage: The Baltic Region in the early Viking Age as seen from Shipboard*, eds. Anton Englert and Athena Trakadas, Maritime Culture of the North 2 (Roskilde: 2009), 220–234.

67 *Or* 19.31–32 and 8.25–29.1 (see further *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, 207 and 158).

68 See Bately, “The Classical Additions in the Old English Orosius,” *England before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. Peter Clemoes and Kathleen Hughes (Cambridge: 1971), 237–251; also *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxi–lxiii and commentary.

seizing of the Sabine women, the rape of Lucretia, and the burning of Mucius Scaevola's hand, knowledge of which Paulus Orosius assumes in his audience and so alludes to only briefly.⁶⁹ Another group is concerned with Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Empire. A third provides information about incidents in battles, most notably the stratagems used by one side or another in the Punic Wars. As with the geographical details mentioned above, only very rarely is it possible to suggest a single likely origin for these. However, most new details have clearly been derived from some source or combination of written sources other than the *Historiae*—although on occasion imaginative recreation on the part of the translator cannot be ruled out.

5.2.1 Additions Involving Military Matters, in Particular Stratagems

A number of additions relating to military stratagems contain details probably ultimately derived from Livy, apparently via either Frontinus or Valerius Maximus. Of Xanthippus' fight against Regulus, for instance, Paulus Orosius, interested mainly in matters such as horrific casualty figures, merely reports that the two sides "joined battle." The Old English version, in contrast, describes the Greek general's preparations for the encounter:

Orosius 94.12–17: Exantipus...gesette twa folc diegellice on twa healfa his 7 þridde beæftan him, 7 bebead þæm twam folcum, þonne he self mid þæm fyrmestan dæle wið þæs æftemestan fluge, þæt hie þonne on Reguluses fird on twa healfa þwyres on fore.⁷⁰

With this compare Frontinus's account, taken apparently from a now lost book of Livy:

Frontinus, *Stratagemata* II.iii.10: Xanthippus...adversus M. Atilium Regulum levem armaturam in prima acie conlocavit, in subsidio autem robur exercitus praecepitque auxiliariis, ut emissis telis cederent hosti et, cum se intra suorum ordines recepissent, confestim in latera discurrerent et a cornibus rursus erumperent; exceptumque iam hostem a robustioribus et ipsi circumierunt.⁷¹

69 *Or* 39.5–16, 40.5–12, 41.1–11.

70 "Exantipus...set two troops secretly on his two flanks, and the third troop behind him, and ordered the two troops that, when he himself fled with the vanguard towards the those at the back, they should then advance on Regulus's army on two sides obliquely." Cf. *OH* IV.ix.2 "pugnam...conseruit."

71 "Xanthippus...in the campaign against M. Atilius Regulus, placed his light-armed troops in the front line, holding the strongest troops in support [i.e. reserve], and ordered the

Another passage probably drawing on Frontinus is the description of Hanno as coming *unwærlice* ("unwarily") upon Scipio, reflecting the information provided by Livy that the Carthaginian leader was first lured out of the town of Salaeca by Scipio's ally Massinissa and then attacked by Roman cavalry concealed in the hills,⁷² while also ultimately from Livy, but in this case probably via a brief resumé such as that of Valerius Maximus, is the account of the stratagem adopted by Hannibal at the battle of Cannae, when the Carthaginian leader ordered part of his forces to simulate flight in the middle of the battle:

Orosius 101.6–13: þæt wæs, ðæt he on fæstre stowe let sum his folc 7 mid sumum for angean þa consulas; 7 raðe þæs þe hie tosomne comon, he fleah wið þara þe þær beæftan waeron, 7 him þa consulas wæron æfterfylgende 7 þæt folc sleande 7 wendon þæt hie on ðæm dæge sceoldon habban þone mæstan sige. Ac raðe þæs þe Hannibal to his fultume com, he gefliemde ealle þa consulas 7 on Romanum swa micel wæl geslog swa heora næfre næs ne ær ne siþþan æt anum gefeohhte.⁷³

Valerius Maximus, *Memorabilium*, VII.iv.ext 2: [D]einde [Hannibal] partem copiarum suarum inter ipsum proelii tempus de industria fugere iussit; quam cum a reliquo exercitu abrupta legio Romana sequeretur, trucidandam eam ab iis quos in insidiis collocaverat curavit.⁷⁴

auxiliary troops that after hurling their javelins, they should give way to the enemy, and when they had withdrawn within the ranks of their fellow-soldiers, that they should immediately hasten to the flanks, and burst out again from the wings; and [so] these troops encircled the enemy, which had already been intercepted by the stronger forces."

72 *Or.* 106.10. *OH* IV.xviii.17 merely relates that Scipio went to Africa, killed Hanno, and destroyed his army, with which compare the reports in Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita Libri*, ed. Guilelmus Weissenborn and Mauritius Müller (Leipzig: 1914), XXIX.xxxiv; and (of Scipio's more general strategy) Frontinus, *De Iuli Frontini Strategematon Libri IV*, ed. Gottholdus Gundermann (Leipzig: 1888), III.vi.1.

73 "[T]hat was, that he left some of his army in a secure place and with others advanced against the consuls, and shortly after they came together, he fled towards those who were behind there, and the consuls pursued them and slaughtered that body of men and believed that on that day they would have the greatest victory. But shortly after Hannibal came to his reinforcements, he put to flight all the consuls and wreaked such great slaughter on the Romans as never happened to them in a single battle either before or since." *OH* IV.xvi.2–3 merely reports the battle's outcome.

74 Valerius Maximus, *Factorum et Dictorum Memorabilium Libri Novem*, ed. Carolus Kempf (Leipzig, 1888). "Then [Hannibal] ordered part of his forces to flee deliberately in the middle of the battle; when they were separated from the rest of the army and a Roman legion pursued them, he saw to it that it [the legion] was cut to pieces by men whom he had stationed in ambush." Cf. Livy XXII. 45–49 and for variations on this account, see Frontinus II.iii.7, Florus, *L. Annaei Flori Epitomae Libri II*, ed. Otto Rossbach (Leipzig: 1896), I.xxii.16.

Lastly, a passage in Sallust, *Bellum Jugurthinum*, has (again directly or indirectly) provided details for an expansion to the report in the Latin text that Marius “by deception” [*dolo*] encircled and captured the town of Capsa, the Old English version explaining that the consul first marched towards one town, as though he thought to take it by storm, but when *Geoweorþa* (Jugurtha) had moved his army there, left, going to another town, also unnamed.⁷⁵

As for additions relating to wars in which the Romans were not involved, these include the details that the half-dead Darius had been pierced by spears and Alexander, cut off from the rest of his army, was stoned by his enemies. This information was to be found in Curtius Rufus’ *History of Alexander the Great*, while the description of the “trick” used by Philip of Macedon against the inhabitants of Bizantium, with part of his forces concealed, is apparently a misattribution of Frontinus’ account of precautions taken by that ruler against flight by his own men.⁷⁶

5.2.2 Additions Relating to the Legends of Early Rome and other Famous Episodes of Classical History

The popularity of stories such as these in Latin literature makes source-hunting a matter of some complexity. Thus, for instance, the garbled account of Manlius Torquatus’ execution of his son for engaging in single combat contains details, apparently ultimately from Livy, which could have reached the translator directly or indirectly via Valerius Maximus, Florus, Augustine, Jerome and others.⁷⁷

Occasionally, however, an unusual detail can point to just one or two likely sources as lying behind the version in the Old English translation. Thus Regulus’ reply to the Romans’ insistence that he should not return to Carthagian captivity and certain death (that it was not appropriate that someone should be a people’s king, *leoda cyning*, who previously was slave to an army, *folce þeow*) could be echoing either the comment in Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*,

75 Sallust, *C. Sallusti Crispi Catilina, Iugurtha, fragmenta ampliora*, ed. Alphonsus Kurfess (Leipzig: 1957), 89–91, *OH* V.xv.8, *Or* 121.8–15.

76 Curtius Rufus, *Q. Curti Rufi Historiarum Alexandri Magni Macedonis Libri qui supersunt*, ed. Edmundus Hedicke (Leipzig: 1908), V.xiii.16 and IX.v.7; *Or* 70.10, 73.12 and *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, 259 and 262; Frontinus, II.viii.14; *Or* 64.19–22; *OH* III.xiii.6 *fraude*. For other such additions see Bately, “The Classical Additions,” 237–251.

77 *Or* 59.29–60.7. That the story is here wrongly attached to Torquatus’s fellow consul “Detius Mure” may suggest marginalia or commentary as its immediate source. See further Bately, “Classical Additions,” 250, n.7; *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxii; most recently Godden, “*OE Orosius* and its Sources,” 300–301; and my reply to Godden, Janet Bately, “The Dissemination of Classical Knowledge: *OE Orosius* and its Sources Again,” forthcoming.

that having once been the slave of the Africans, he could not hold the position of an honourable citizen in Rome, or an almost identical statement in Eutropius.⁷⁸ The theory that Scipio Aemilianus Africanus was smothered (*asmorodon*) in his bed could have been derived from a source such as Velleius Paterculus or Sidonius,⁷⁹ while the *Orosius*' description of Julius Caesar's behaviour at Munda, when Caesar, fearing that he might be taken prisoner and preferring death to capture, "pressed the harder against the enemy," could be coloured by knowledge of the account of the incident in Florus, *Epitome*, where Caesar is said to have rushed like a madman to the front line.⁸⁰

5.2.3 Sources of Minor Additions

To pin down the most likely immediate source of any of the very numerous more minor additions, such as that centaurs were half horse, half man; that Cleopatra had been Julius Caesar's mistress; and that consuls held office for one year at a time, is quite impossible, though that Marius was Julius Caesar's uncle is presumably derived ultimately from the now lost opening of Suetonius' *Life of Caesar*.⁸¹

5.2.4 Direct or Indirect Borrowing

The full list of Latin texts that contain material found in the form of additions and expansions in the *Orosius* is thus extremely impressive—so impressive, in fact, that it has been received with a certain scepticism. Indeed as Malcom Godden observes,

For some of these writers there is no other trace at any time in Anglo-Saxon England. If the translator really did know these authors, we need to rethink the whole history of Anglo-Saxon scholarly culture. And the modern view that the translator repeatedly misunderstood and mistranslated Orosius's Latin and revealed appalling ignorance of ancient history

78 *Or* 96.1–2; Augustine, *De Civitate Dei Libri XXII*, ed. Bernardus Dombart and Alphonsus Kalb, CCSL 47, 48 (Turnhout: 1955), V.xviii; Eutropius, *Eutropi Breviarium ab Urbe Condita*, ed. Franciscus Ruehl (Leipzig: 1887), II.xxv. For OE *folc* as either "army" or "people" see DOE, F: *folc*.

79 *Or* 119.3–6; Velleius Paterculus, *C. Vellei Paterculi ex Historiae Romanae Libris Duobus quae supersunt*, ed. C. Stegmann de Pritzwald (1933, repr. Stuttgart: 1965); II.iv.5, Sidonius Apollinaris, *Gai Solii Apollinaris Sidonii, Epistulae et Carmina*, ed. Christianus Luetjohann et al., MGH Auctorum Antiquissimorum (1887), vol. 8, xi ("strangled").

80 *Or* 128.24–29; OH VI.xvi.7; Florus II.xiii. 82–83.

81 See *Or* 124.19–20 and commentary, 310. (According to Plutarch, *Lives*, ed. Bernadotte Perrin [London: 1914–26], Marius was married to Caesar's aunt.)

and culture makes it all the more puzzling that he should have been able to exploit such a wide range of classical sources.⁸²

However, there is ample evidence that at the very least a substantial proportion of this material, if not all, must have reached the translator not directly from these authors, but at second- or perhaps even third- or fourth-hand, via glosses or commentary, or some other now lost intermediary, maybe orally, and that on a significant number of occasions information used is garbled and facts are misrepresented.⁸³

5.2.5 Ignorance and Error⁸⁴

Some of the details provided in these additions are incorrect, reflecting perhaps imperfect knowledge of classical history and myth, partial recollection, simple misunderstanding or misinterpretation, or on occasion even resulting from invention. Error, for instance, involving the telescoping of two events and of completely different people, is responsible for the *Orosius*' dramatic substitution for the *Historiae*'s "Cato killed himself at Utica" of an account of Cato's conversation with his son and suicide. In the Old English version, Cato leaps

82 Godden, "The OE *Orosius* and its Sources," 298 and n.5 (citing Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Library*, 49, n.84, "it is worth adding that, for a number of these sources—Livy, Curtius Rufus, and Suetonius—there is no independent evidence of circulation in England, before 1066...which casts serious doubts on the validity of Bately's source identifications"). Lapidge appears, however, to have overlooked my repeated warnings that material from the author of the *Orosius* "need not have been familiar with all these works (or indeed any of them) at first hand" (see *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxi-lxii and note 83, below).

83 See Janet M. Bately, "Evidence for Knowledge of Latin Literature in Old English," *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Culture*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach with the assistance of Virginia Darrow Oggins, *Studies in Medieval Culture* 20 (Kalamazoo: 1986), 35–51, esp. 37–38 and 41–42; "Classical Additions," 250–251; "Geographical Information," 59–62; *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxi-lxviii; and "Those Books that it is Necessary for All Men to Know," *The Classics in the Middle Ages*, ed. Aldo S. Bernardo and Saul Levin, *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* (Binghamton, N.Y.: 1990), 45–78, 59 and 67, n.18; also Whitelock, "Prose," 91. For knowledge of classical and patristic texts by ninth-century continental scholars, see, e.g., *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxi; and Joseph S. Wittig, "King Alfred's Boethius and its Latin Sources: A Reconsideration," *ASE* 11 (1983): 157–198, at 169, n. 33.

84 On this subject see now Godden's comment, "OE *Orosius* and its Sources," 318 (citing Bately *OE Orosius*, 245): "criticising [the translator] for being 'ignorant of the true outcome' of a siege...is unhelpful." My observation that the translator shows no knowledge of either Livy or Florus at this point was intended as no more than a statement of fact and reinforces both my argument and Godden's that the translator probably did not have direct knowledge of these authors.

off the city wall, with the result that his body completely burst apart (*“þæt he eall tobærst”*).⁸⁵ According to Latin sources, however, it seems to be one Cleombrotus who died in this manner. Cato more tamely stabbed himself at home in bed. Similarly, the locality where Cinna was killed by his army was not “Smyrna, Asia byrg,” as the *Orosius* would have it⁸⁶ but Ancona. The error presumably reflects a piece of information that linked the names Cinna and Smyrna, but with reference to a poet and his epic poem.⁸⁷ Similarly, misinterpretation, or careless reading, of a sequence of clauses with subject unexpressed, together with an exercising of the translator’s imagination, is responsible for the moving account of the death of a certain Firmus who, being led off to execution, asks to be baptised:

Orosius 152.23–26: 7 þa he gefulwad wæs, he wæs...on swa fullum geleafan heofonrices, þæt he cwæð to ðæm folce, “Doð nu swa ge willen,” 7 him self leat forþ þæt him mon aslog þæt heafod of 7 wearð Cristes martyre.⁸⁸

In fact, the actual martyr of the story was the Roman general Theodosius, who had earlier defeated Firmus, and the “last words” given in direct speech in the Old English version are a complete fabrication.⁸⁹ However, we have no way of telling how much of this inaccurate information is to be attributed to the translator himself, how much to some intermediate source or sources.

5.3 *Glosses and Commentaries as Sources*

Amongst the translator’s most plausible secondary sources are Latin commentaries, scholia and glosses. So, for instance, in the account of the seizing of the Sabine women as wives for the Romans, we are told that when, in a subsequent battle, the women interposed themselves between husbands and fathers, they had with them their children.⁹⁰ This detail comes from Ovid, *Fasti*, but is found

85 *OH* VI.xvi.4, *Or* 128.13–19, and (for the suicide of Cleombrotus), *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, 314–315. For other misapprehensions see Bately, “Classical Additions,” 244–245. For the greater number of “near-incredible or ridiculous statements...left uncorrected” in the later Books, see Simeon Potter, “Commentary on King Alfred’s *Orosius*,” *Anglia* 71 (1953): 385–437, at 422; and *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxxix–lxxx.

86 *Or* 125.12–13. *OH* gives no location.

87 *Smyrna*, or *Zmyrna*, c.55 B.C., named after its heroine of that name.

88 “and when he had been baptized he was...in such full faith in the heavenly kingdom that he said to the people, ‘Do now as you wish’, and bent over so that his head was struck off and he became martyr of Christ.”

89 *Or* 152.18–26; *OH* VII.xxxiii.5–7.

90 *Or* 39.10–16.

also in scholia on Lucan and Juvenal, and could have reached the translator of the *Orosius* from an intermediate source of this type.⁹¹ Knowledge of the geography of continental Europe in the ninth and early tenth century could also have reached the author of the Old English text via a commentary or glossed manuscript, though the possibility that he had a map, plan, or oral source—even personal experience of parts of the area—cannot be ignored.

5.3.1 Glossed Manuscripts of Orosius' *Historiae* and a Fragmentary Commentary

A number of the manuscripts of the *Historiae* contain marginal glosses, some of which may have provided information used in the *Orosius*.⁹² So, for instance, in the latter, when Pyrrhus asks his gods (that is to say, the Delphic oracle) which of them was to have the victory, he or the Romans, they answer him *tweolice* ("ambiguously," *OH responso ambiguo*), saying, "ƿu hæfst oþþe næfst," reflecting the widespread Orosius gloss *Aio te, Aeacida, Romanos vincere posse*, which, literally translated, is "I say, descendant of Aeneas, you the Romans can defeat," promising either that the Romans could defeat Pyrrhus or that Pyrrhus could defeat the Romans.⁹³ In the event, Pyrrhus' victory over the Romans was a hollow—"Pyrrhic"—one.

Also ultimately from a manuscript gloss, the phrase *sine nomine* ("without a name") attached to *Historiae* III.xxiii.8, *socer Perdiccae* ("father-in-law of Perdicca"), via the corrupt reading *Sinomen*, lies behind the name *Stromen* for the ruler of Lesser Media after Alexander the Great's death (77.26), a name found also in a handful of Latin manuscripts close to the *Orosius*.⁹⁴ Similarly, the claim that Valerianus was called Augustus by the "Emilites" (*Emilitum þæm folce*), where the Latin reads *ab exercitu* ("by the army") would seem to depend on some gloss or comment, such as "*a militibus*" ("by the soldiers").⁹⁵ As for the curious detail that it was *an cwene* ("a woman") who shot Philip of Macedon in the thigh, where the Latin tells merely how he was wounded *in femore*, must surely be put down to the fact that *femur* ("thigh") has an alternative ablative singular form, *femine*.⁹⁶ Were this form to have been entered as a

91 *P. Ovidius Naso, Opera*, ed. Rudolfus Merkel (Leipzig: 1896), *Fasti* III.187–228. The information that the women also prostrated themselves at their fathers' feet is to be found in Ovid and in Augustine, *Civ. Dei*.

92 See above, n. 62.

93 *OH* IV.i.7; *Or* 84.8–11: "You will have or you will not have [it]." See further Bately, "King Alfred and the Latin MSS. of Orosius' History," 97.

94 Bately, "Latin MSS," 90.

95 *Or* 144.21, *OH* VII.xxii.1.

96 *Or* 64.29, *OH* III.xiii.8.

gloss alongside *femore*, it could well have been confused with the late Latin spelling *femine* for *feminae*, dative singular of *femina*, “woman.”⁹⁷

On the other hand, the translator could have had as an intermediary a commentary, similar to the fragment covering *OH* 1.1.13–11.xii.5, now in the Vatican Library.⁹⁸ This fragment, possibly ultimately of Irish origin,⁹⁹ has a few pieces of information found also in the *Orosius*, as, for example, the names of the people and places involved in Paris’ abduction of Helen. Paulus Orosius here merely refers to the *raptus Helenae*, assuming knowledge of the story on the part of his readers. However, in the Old English version we are told that it happened that “Alexander, Priamises sunu þæs cyninges, of Troiana þære byrig, genom þæs cyninges wif Monelaus, of Læcedemonia, Creca byrig, Elena,”¹⁰⁰ and an entry in the Vatican fragment, fol.7r, identifies Alexander, also known as Paris the shepherd (*qui et Paris pastor*), names his father as Priam, and describes Helen as Lacedaemonian and wife of Menelaus. This fragment also gives some of the details of the seizing of the Sabine women, but not of the intervention of the wives and mothers.¹⁰¹

6 Style of Translation

Of the translator I once wrote that “although he may not have literary sophistication of an Ælfric, he can fairly be claimed to have achieved a fluent, effective, and generally lucid style, which, while being relatively simple, yet serves his purpose well.”¹⁰² Indeed, what he has succeeded in producing is a translation that is not a translation, that has released itself from the shackles of word-for-word representation of an alien language, that gives the impression of being low key, but which combines clarity with an attention for sentence rhythms and an ability to call up appropriate stylistic registers for a variety of different contexts.

97 Cf., e.g., *Abstrusa* gloss *femine*: *femore*.

98 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.Reg.lat. 1650, fols. 1r–10v. See further Bately, “Classical Additions”; “Those Books,” 47–59; and *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxii and n.4.

99 Paul Lehmann, “Reste und Spuren antiker Gelehrsamkeit in Mittelalterlichen Texten,” *Erforschung des Mittelalters*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: 1959), 29–37, at 30–31.

100 *Or* 31.23–25: “Alexander, son of King Priam, from the town of Troy, took Elena, the wife of King Monelaus, from the Greek town, Læcedemonia.” cf. *OH* 1.xvii.1, “raptus Helenae.”

101 I have found no evidence, however, that a version of this commentary was actually known to the translator. For material in it in the *Boethius*, not used in *Or*, see Bately, “Those Books,” especially 59–65, and *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 2, 311–312.

102 *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, ci; see further c–cv.

Not the least striking stylistic feature of the Old English translation is the way it makes an event immediate by its use of direct speech. Sometimes this is a reworking of direct speech already in the *Historiae*, as in the case of Thamyris' revenge on Cyrus for the death of her son, when the queen having ordered the king's head to be cut off and thrown into a leather bag filled with human blood, exclaims: "Satia te...sanguine quem sitisti, cuius per annos triginta insatiabilis perseuerasti." In the Old English this becomes the cry, "Þu þe þýrstende wære monnes bloddes xxx wintra, drync nu þine fylle."¹⁰³

Sometimes direct speech replaces indirect. In the *Historiae*, when Marius' army lacked drinking water, the general, in response to numerous complaints, is said to have replied that water was indeed in sight, but that it had to be claimed by the sword: "aquam quidem in conspectu esse respondit, sed eam ferro uindicandam."¹⁰⁴ In the Old English, in contrast, the answer is direct and far more effective in its parallels and oppositions:

Orosius 122.17–19: "Eaþe we magon geseon on oþre healfe urra feonda hwær se drinca is gelang þe us nihst is; ac for þæm þe hie us near sint, we him ne magon buton gefeohte to cuman."¹⁰⁵

Again, where the Latin merely reports Leonidas' warning before Thermopylae, that a great deal was to be hoped for from glory but nothing from life, "de gloria plurimum, de uita nihil sperandum," the translator, echoing a favourite theme of Old English literature, makes the Spartan leader cry: "Now that we know without doubt we must give up our own lives...let us devise how we may...achieve for ourselves the best and most long-lasting epitaph at our end" ["betst word 7 longsumast æt urum ende gewyrca"].¹⁰⁶

Often, however, the instances of direct speech have no basis in the Latin, and are either inspired by a secondary source, or, seemingly, attributable to the translator's own imagination.¹⁰⁷ One example of creative ingenuity occurs in the passage that replaces the *Historiae*'s reference to the capture of Babylon as

103 *OH* II.vii.6: "Sate yourself with the blood for which you thirsted, with which for thirty years you have continued to be unsatiated," *Or* 45.8–9: "You, who have been thirsting for man's blood for thirty years, drink now your fill."

104 *OH* V.xvi.10.

105 "Easily may we see on the other side of our enemies where the drink is to be got that is nearest to us; but because they are nearer to us, we may not come to it without a fight."

106 *Or* 47.5–9; cf. *OH* II.ix.7, and see also *Or* 103.3–7, on the "never surrender" theme, expanding on *OH* IV.xvi.21 (above, 327).

107 See, e.g., Cato's speech to his son, *Or* 128.15–18 and commentary.

confirmation of “mutabilium rerum instabiles status.”¹⁰⁸ Instead, the translator, using parallels, oppositions and lexical variations, calls up an image of a crumbling city, with, at its centre, a lament placed in the mouth of that city which must surely have appealed to an Anglo-Saxon audience familiar with the *topos* of transitoriness through its vernacular poetry.¹⁰⁹

Orosius 43.33–44.6: That same city of Babylon, which was greatest and first [*mæst wæs 7 ærest*] of all cities is now least and most desolate [*læst 7 westast*]. Now the city that previously was the most secure, and most wonderful and most famous of all strongholds [*ealra weorca fæstast 7 wunderlecast 7 mærast*], is as if she [or “it”?, referring to feminine *seo burg*] was set as an example to all the world, and moreover was herself speaking to all mankind and should say: “Now I have thus fallen and passed away [*gehroren... 7 aweg gewiten*], lo, (*hwæt*)¹¹⁰ you may perceive in me and understand [*ongietan 7 oncnawan*] that you have nothing of firmly fixed or strong [*fæstes ne stronges*] with you that may remain throughout.”

In this passage, the direct speech is set in a passage of heightened language which employs a number of stylistic devices found throughout the translation, although in general, given the distance between the events involved and the translator’s own time, strong emotional reactions to events are the exception not the rule.¹¹¹ One striking instance is the description of the survivors of the sack of Rome by the Gauls, which follows an invented question given to “Orosius.” “Hu þyncð eow nu, cwæð Orosius, þe þæs cristendomes tida leah-triað...hu bliðe tida Romane æfter ðæm hæfdon?”¹¹²

Orosius 52.17–22: When the wretches [*iermingas*] who had survived (*to lafe wurdon*) crept from the holes that they had been lurking in (*on lutedan*), so tearful [*bewopene*] as if they had come from another world, when they gazed [*besawon*] on the burnt [*besengdan*] and devastated city, [was it not] that then there was exceptional terror for them, where there had been the greatest pleasure; also apart from that evil they had neither

108 *OH* II.vi.13: “the unstable conditions of changing events.”

109 See, e.g., Potter, “Commentary,” 401, Deborah VanderBilt, “Translation and Orality in the OE *Orosius*,” *Oral Tradition* 13 (1998): 377–397.

110 For *hwæt* here as reminiscent of OE poetry, see VanderBilt, “Translation,” 385–386.

111 See further OE *Orosius*, ed. Bately, civ–cv.

112 Or 52.15–17: “How does it seem to you now,” he asks, “who blame Christian times...what happy times the Romans had after that?” Rewriting, based on *OH* II.xix.12.

food within it nor friend outside [*naþer ne þærinne mete ne þærute freond*].¹¹³

In contrast with the practice in the texts of the Alfredian canon, similes, extended or not, are not a distinctive feature of the *Orosius*. However, balance, contrasts, and word-pairs are used throughout with discrimination, as is alliteration, sometimes combined with the rhythms reminiscent of Old English poetry.¹¹⁴ So, for instance, in the description of the women rushing with their children between the combatants in the Roman-Sabine wars and falling at their fathers' feet ("7 heora fæderum wæron to fotum feallende"), or the account of Scipio's young son, at the battle of the Ticinus, standing in front of his grievously wounded father until the latter could flee ("he hiene foran forstod oð he on fleame fealh.")¹¹⁵

7 Authorship and Date

7.1 *The Author*

Who, then, might have been responsible for the Old English *Orosius*? What kind of person sets out to translate a text by an authority figure, and then decides to rewrite it from his own point of view? Much of the Christian polemic in the original is omitted, and there is nothing to indicate that the author was a devout cleric. A number of expansions relate to stratagems, yet these are not always handled as if by someone particularly knowledgeable about military tactics. However, like both the early Chronicle and much Old English poetry, the *Orosius* shows an interest in vengeance, in the importance of loyalty of "thegns," and in "last-ditch" stands, while bravery and honourable behaviour in the days before the coming of Christianity—not a feature of the *Historiae*—is both mentioned and commended.¹¹⁶ There is nothing at all to suggest that the person responsible was not a native English speaker or, more precisely, a West Saxon. (That some of the evidence provided by curious spellings of unfamiliar personal names may suggest that part at least of the finished text was at some time dictated by a non-native speaker of English does not of course tell us anything about the author's own linguistic identity.)

¹¹³ Passage replacing *OH* II.xix.10–11.

¹¹⁴ In contrast with *OEHE* and *OEGD*, use of word-pairs is not obtrusive.

¹¹⁵ *Or* 39.14–15, and 100.1.

¹¹⁶ See, e.g., Whitelock, "Prose," 91–92, *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, xcix, and (for opportunities missed), xcvi–xcvii.

How knowledgeable then was the author of the *Orosius*? Whoever it was does not appear to have been a person of particularly great scholarship, although it would seem he (or she) had access, either directly or more probably at second hand, to a very wide range of classical and geographical information. At the same time, in spite of its not infrequent translation errors,¹¹⁷ the Old English text seems to be the work of someone who had a reasonably good working knowledge of Latin—which of course was still a spoken language at the time—and was capable of using a relatively straightforward, relaxed, effective, and idiomatic style when producing written English.

7.2 *The Date*

Palaeographical evidence tells us no more than that the translation must precede the copying of MS L, “s.x¹.” What internal evidence there is for dating is confined to a handful of details in the Old English not present in the *Historiae*. The most important is the account of Ohthere’s report to King Alfred, which clearly has to be from the period 871–899, the years from Alfred’s succession through to his death. However, since this account would appear to have been inserted in the text by someone other than the translator, and after the work was completed, an early tenth-century date for the interpolation rather than a late ninth-century one cannot be ruled out. Other details which might shed light on dating are minor additions to the text as a whole in the form of the identification of peoples and places. Yet once again there are problems. That a reference in the text identifying the Basternae of 175B.C. with the Hungarians (*Hungerre*), a people who first became generally known to western Europe in the course of the ninth century but are not mentioned in the geographical chapter, may suggest a date not before 889, is of no great help in establishing a *terminus post quem*.¹¹⁸ Neither is the surely intentionally belittling expansion, in a reference to “what we now call conflict, when strangers and foreigners come upon us and rob us of some small amount, and speedily leave us again,” although it could, maybe, have been appropriate to a time before the Viking Great Army of the 890s became perceived as a serious menace.¹¹⁹

Three other items which at first sight might anchor the translation firmly in the closing years of Alfred’s reign are again of doubtful assistance. The first

¹¹⁷ See, e.g., Potter, “Commentary.”

¹¹⁸ Or 110.7–8. See further *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, lxxxix–xc; and Janet M. Bately, “The Dating of Old English Prose: Some Problems and Pitfalls, with Special Reference to the Alfredian Canon,” *The Kemble Lectures on Anglo-Saxon Studies, 2009–12*, ed. Alice Jorgensen, Helen Conrad-O’Brian and John Scattergood (Trinity College, Dublin: forthcoming 2014).

¹¹⁹ Or 83.1–3.

of these is the expansion of a reference to the emperor Titus to include his famous saying, that he lost the day on which he did nothing good, a saying that is found also in the part of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle that has been dated to c.891. For Dorothy Whitelock the wording of the two texts suggested that it was the Chronicle which was borrowing from the *Orosius*, “unless both had a common Old English source of whose existence we have no other trace, and this seems unlikely.”¹²⁰ However, as I have argued elsewhere, the entries in the two texts may in fact be best explained as derived independently from Isidore, *Chronicon*, and as a consequence we cannot use the verbal correspondences between the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and *Orosius* as evidence for either text’s being dependent on, and thus later in date than, the other.¹²¹

The second item is the “close agreement” of a reference to Etna in the *Boethius* with an entry in the *Orosius*, which may suggest either that “the latter influenced OEBO or that both were drawing on the same contemporary tradition.”¹²²

The third is the presence of a reference to a Gothic king called *Rædgota* in both *Bo* and *Or*. In the latter it is a replacement for the *Radagaisus* of its source, possibly via the anglicised form *Rædgar* and, as I have argued elsewhere, there are grounds for supposing that this incorrect reading was adopted by the *Boethius* from the *Orosius*.¹²³ Provided we accept Alfred’s authorship of the *Boethius*, we might then very tentatively propose the parameters c. 889–899 for the composition of the *Orosius*.

Finally, the use of Ireland’s old name, *Scotland*, three times in the geographical chapter, links the text with the *Bede* and the *Chronicle* annal 891, as against the reading *Iraland* in the *Chronicle*, annal 914, and the Ohthere and Wulfstan interpolation.¹²⁴

The answer to the question “when was the *Orosius* composed?” then, is that this could well have been during Alfred’s lifetime, but that a very slightly later date cannot be ruled out.¹²⁵

120 Whitelock, “Prose,” 74.

121 See Bately, “World History in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Its Sources and its Separateness from the Old English *Orosius*,” *ASE* 8 (1979): 177–194, at 190; and “The Dating.”

122 *OE Boethius*, ed. Godden and Irvine, vol. 2, 307; see also *OE Orosius*, ed. Bately, 243.

123 Bately, “The Dating.”

124 An entry written “in principle” between c. 915 and c. 930. See, e.g., David Dumville, *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar* (Woodbridge: 1992), ch. 3; and *ASCCE*, vol. 3, *MS A*, ed. Bately, xxxiii–xxxiv.

125 For a date “at some point between 870 and 930,” see Godden, “The *OE Orosius* and its Sources,” 1, and Malcolm Godden, “The Old English *Orosius* and its Context: Who Wrote It, for Whom, and Why?,” *Quaestio Insularis* 12 (2011): 1–30, at 9.

8 The OE *Orosius* and Alfred's Plan

Although we now reject the claim that King Alfred himself translated the *Orosius*, this of course does mean that the task could not have been undertaken as part of his educational plan. As with the *Pastoral Care*, we have evidence that a number of copies of the work were made, one even in use late enough for its contents—astonishingly—to be a major source of an Old French poem, Calendre's *Les Empereors de Rome*, while there are interesting similarities between our text and the Alfredian canon in the ways in which their Latin sources are rendered into the vernacular.¹²⁶

We do not of course know when Alfred first formulated his plan for the translation of “those books necessary for all men to know.” However, he would certainly have welcomed and approved of the inclusion in, or addition to the list of his desiderata of, the “book that is called Orosius.”

¹²⁶ See Janet Bately, “Alfred's *Orosius* and *Les Empereors de Rome*,” *Studies in Philology* 57 (1960): 567–586.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle

Susan Irvine

The production of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle has long been associated with Alfred's reign. To refer to Alfred as "patron" of the project inevitably raises the question of just how closely the king was involved. On the one hand, there is no evidence that Alfred himself contributed to the composition of any of the annals, nor that he supervised its compilation.¹ On the other, there is every reason to suspect that this is a project which he would have favoured. Like other Alfredian intellectual enterprises, it seems to have had a continental precedent, as we shall see below.² It also celebrates the role of Alfred's own West Saxon dynasty in bringing together various English kingdoms under unitary rule. Indeed, by capturing the shared past of the Anglo-Saxon peoples, the Chronicle undoubtedly contributed to the idea of an English community or *Angelcynn* which, as Sarah Foot has shown, was intrinsic to the political ideology of the late ninth century.³

This essay will focus primarily on the common stock of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (that is, the original compilation up to around 890) and the annals which were added up to 896. It aims to explore the ways in which the Chronicle responded to and exploited the historical, literary and political imperatives of Alfred's reign. It will address such issues as genre and its implications, the relationship between the Chronicle and its sources, links with annalistic activity on the Continent, and the manuscript and linguistic evidence for compilation and circulation in Alfred's reign. It will also examine the ways in which various annals and sets of annals may fit into the Chronicle as a whole.

1 See Janet M. Bately, "The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 60 BC to AD 890: Vocabulary as Evidence," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 64 (1978): 93–129. For the now discarded view that Alfred was directly involved, see, for example, Charles Plummer and John Earle (eds.), *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, 2 vols. (Oxford: 1892–99), II.civ; and R.H.C. Davis, "Alfred the Great: Propaganda and Truth," *History* 56 (1971): 169–182, at 177.

2 See below, 347.

3 See Sarah Foot, "The Making of *Angelcynn*: English Identity Before the Norman Conquest," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, 6 (1990): 25–49; repr. in *Old English Literature: Critical Essays*, ed. R.M. Liuzza (New Haven: 2002), 51–78. For the view that "the politicisation of English identity has...probably been exaggerated," see George Molyneux, "The *Old English Bede*: English Ideology or Christian Instruction?" *EHR* 124 (2009): 1289–1323, at 1316.

Genre and Sources

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is ostensibly concerned with the recording rather than interpretation of the past. From a medieval perspective, a “chronicle” was a very different kind of work from a “history.” Early medieval Christian authors such as Cassiodorus, Isidore of Seville and Bede drew clear distinctions between accounts of the past which were arranged chronologically (chronicles or annals) and those which conferred shape and meaning (histories).⁴ In conforming to the rhetorical structures associated with the genre of the chronicle, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle sets itself apart from the history which Bede, for example, offered in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

In form, the Chronicle is a collection of annals, a list of records arranged in chronological order on a year-by-year basis. The dates act as a structuring device, as do such phrases as “her” and “on þissum geare” (“here” and “in this year”). The events recounted are meaningful only insofar as they are part of a sequence. Janet Thormann compares chronicles to genealogies, “in that they are ruled by chronology: their syntax is a parataxis governed by succession in time.”⁵ Just as chronicles are ruled by chronology, so they in turn represent an attempt to impose order on the flow of time, to codify its passing in a schematic form. They offer a framework for visualizing the passing of time as a sequence of events often unconnected to one another.

Not surprisingly, given that the aim of chronicles is to record events, their style is characteristically matter-of-fact. The Chronicle shares this conventional stylistic restraint, with its often terse entries, its avoidance of commentary on events, and its disjointedness of presentation and content. These features, while precluding eloquence, had the advantage of conveying a sense of objectivity and authority. Cecily Clark points out that the plain style of so many of the Chronicle entries, in accordance with generic expectation, offers a kind of guarantee of the authenticity of the information provided

4 See David Dumville, “What is a Chronicle?” in *The Medieval Chronicle II: Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on the Medieval Chronicle Driebergen/Utrecht 16–21 July 1999*, ed. Erik Kooper (Amsterdam and New York: 2002), 1–27, and Sarah Foot, “Finding the Meaning of Form: Narrative in Annals and Chronicles,” in *Writing Medieval History*, ed. Nancy Partner (London: 2005), 88–108. See also Jennifer Neville, “Making Their Own Sweet Time: The Scribes of Anglo-Saxon Chronicle A,” in *The Medieval Chronicle II*, ed. Kooper, 166–177.

5 Janet Thormann, “The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle Poems and the Making of the English Nation,” in *Anglo-Saxonism and the Construction of Social Identity*, ed. Allen J. Frantzen and John D. Niles (Gainesville, Florida: 1997), 60–85, at 60. See below on the genealogical list which opens the Chronicle.

(irrespective of how accurate they may or may not be).⁶ The plain style might also act as a way of drawing attention to patterns linking characters and events. As Jacqueline Stodnick has recently argued, the Chronicle's formulaic language "not only generates a generic identity for the Chronicle as an annals text, but also provides a subtle register for drawing connections or differences between types of event and groups of people."⁷

The genre of the chronicle, with its chronological structure and plain style, might seem to represent resistance to lofty ideological aims. Collections of annals focus on facts, discourage discursive interpretation, and entail discontinuities. In the case of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, however, notwithstanding the restrictedness which the conventions of its genre would seem to impose, a far-reaching coherent narrative underlying the work as a whole can be seen to emerge. Foot persuasively relates this to the formation of an English identity:

The Chronicle plots, as a series of parallel tracks, a selection of events known and available to the compilers which recount the pasts of all of the separate English kingdoms within one overarching story, the story of the making of the *Anglecynn*.⁸

The Chronicle creates a narrative which explains and defines Englishness in terms of Anglo-Saxon England's evolving political history. Although it encompasses a celebration of the achievements and success of the West Saxons, its function is not simply to act as propaganda for that dynasty nor for Alfred himself.⁹ Rather, the work reads as an account of the history of all the kingdoms of

6 Cecily Clark, "The Narrative Mode of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Before the Conquest," in *England Before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. Peter Clemoes and Kathleen Hughes (Cambridge: 1971), 215–235, at 219–220.

7 Jacqueline Stodnick, "Sentence to Story: Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as Formulary," in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Language, Literature, History*, ed. Alice Jorgensen (Turnhout: 2010), 91–111, at 95.

8 Foot, "Finding the Meaning of Form," 99.

9 For contrasting views on whether the Chronicle can be read as Alfredian propaganda, see Davis, "Alfred the Great," and the response to this view by Dorothy Whitelock, "The Importance of the Battle of Edington, A.D. 878," in her *From Bede to Alfred: Studies in Early Anglo-Saxon Literature and History* (London: 1980), 6–15. For the view that the Chronicle was commissioned in the south-west, independently of Alfred's court, see F.M. Stenton, "The South-Western Element in the Old English Chronicle," in *Essays in Medieval History Presented to Thomas Frederick Tout*, ed. A. G. Little and F. M. Powicke (Manchester: 1925), 15–24; repr. in *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England, Being the Collected Papers of Frank Merry Stenton*, ed. Doris Mary Stenton (Oxford: 1970), 106–115.

Anglo-Saxon England, providing, along with the OE *Bede*, “the essential common history of that single English people.”¹⁰ The fact that it is composed in the vernacular itself acts as testament to the emergence of an English identity.¹¹ The Chronicle’s story of the development of the *Angelcynn* conveys meanings which extend far beyond the often spartan individual records incorporated within it.

In combining political aims with historiography, the Chronicle has much in common with a continental predecessor, the Royal Frankish Annals. This series of annals covers the years from 741 to 829, focusing on the rise to power of the Carolingian rulers and their interactions with the Frankish people. Its production was closely linked to the Carolingian court, and was almost certainly officially sanctioned. Far from being an arbitrary collection of information accrued gradually on a year-by-year basis, the Royal Frankish Annals seem likely, as Rosamund McKitterick has argued, to have been conceived as a coherent project.¹² This kind of “constructing” of the past which has been linked with the Carolingian court may have influenced the production of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as well. Indeed, given the extent of Carolingian links with the intellectual activity at the Alfredian court more generally, it does not seem far-fetched to see in the compilation of the Chronicle what Anton Scharer has called “a tale of emulation of Carolingian court culture.”¹³

The Chronicle, in contrast to the Royal Frankish Annals (whose coverage is less than a century), goes right back to 60 B.C. and the arrival of the Romans in order to chart the history of the English nation. Its broad chronological scope perhaps inevitably means that the sources for its records present a complex and diverse picture. Leaving aside for now the question of how much of its

10 Nicholas Brooks, “English Identity from Bede to the Millennium,” *The Haskins Society Journal* 14 (2003): 33–51, at 48.

11 See Susan Irvine, “English Literature in the Ninth Century,” in *The Cambridge History of Early Medieval English Literature*, ed. Clare A. Lees (Cambridge: 2013), 309–331.

12 Rosamond McKitterick, “Constructing the Past in the Early Middle Ages: The Case of the Royal Frankish Annals,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, 7 (1997): 101–129.

13 Anton Scharer, “The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Continental Annal-Writing,” in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. Jorgensen, 161–166, at 166. See also Anton Scharer, “The Writing of History at King Alfred’s Court,” *EME* 5 (1996): 177–206. For Carolingian ties, see, for example, R.G. Gameson, “Alfred the Great and the Destruction and Production of Christian Books,” *Scriptorium* 49 (1995): 180–210; Janet L. Nelson, *Rulers and Ruling Families in Early Medieval Europe: Alfred, Charles the Bald, and Others* (Aldershot: 1999), esp. items I, II, IV, and VI; and David Pratt, *The Political Thought of King Alfred the Great* (Cambridge: 2007).

material may have been compiled or translated into the vernacular before Alfred's reign, it is possible to identify a number of the influences and sources which ultimately shaped the work. One of these may have been Paschal or Easter Tables.¹⁴ Both style and manuscript layout have been adduced as evidence that the Chronicle originated in the notes added to these chronological Tables used to find the dates for Easter.¹⁵ Although the links between the two have been convincingly demonstrated, the relationship may well have been a more complex one than has often been acknowledged, and the question of whether the Chronicle actually originated in the Easter Tables remains unresolved.¹⁶

Long recognised as a source for the Chronicle is the chronological summary which Bede appended to his *Historia Ecclesiastica*, known as Bede's Epitome.¹⁷ The *Historia Ecclesiastica* itself may also have been consulted, though apparently only sporadically.¹⁸ Isidore's *Chronicon*, Rufinus' translation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, the *Liber Pontificalis*, and Jerome's *De Viris Illustribus* have all been identified as sources for the "world history" annals (those for the period from the landing of Julius Caesar in 60 B.C. to the coming of Hengest

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- 14 On Easter Tables, see Kenneth Harrison, *The Framework of Anglo-Saxon History to A.D. 900* (Cambridge: 1976); and R. L. Poole, *Chronicles and Annals: A Brief Outline of their Origin and Growth* (Oxford: 1926).
 - 15 See, for example, Clark, "The Narrative Mode," 218; M.B. Parkes, "The Palaeography of the Parker Manuscript of the *Chronicle*, Laws and Sedulius, and Historiography at Winchester in the Late Ninth and Tenth Centuries," *ASE* 5 (1976): 149–171, at 154; and Janet Bately, "Manuscript Layout and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 70 (1988): 21–43, repr. in *Textual and Material Culture in Anglo-Saxon England: Thomas Northcote Toller and the Toller Memorial Lectures*, ed. Donald Scragg (Cambridge: 2003), 1–21, at 15–17.
 - 16 McKitterick, "Constructing the Past," urges caution in assuming that annals developed from Easter tables. See also Foot, "Finding the Meaning of Form," 92–94; Joanna Story, "The Frankish Annals of Lindisfarne and Kent," *ASE* 34 (2005): 59–109, at 72–74; Richard Corradini, "The Rhetoric of Crisis: *Computus* and *Liber annalis* in Early Ninth-Century Fulda," in *The Construction of Communities in the Early Middle Ages: Texts, Resources and Artefacts*, ed. Richard Corradini (Leiden: 2003), 269–321; and Stodnick, "Sentence to Story," 92–93.
 - 17 For the Chronicle's debt to Bede's Epitome, see Plummer and Earle, *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, II.cxiii.
 - 18 See Janet Bately, "Bede and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle," in *Saints, Scholars and Heroes: Studies in Medieval Culture in Honour of Charles W. Jones*, ed. Margot H. King and Wesley M. Stevens, 2 vols. (Collegeville: 1979), I.233–54. The so-called "northern recension" of the Chronicle makes much fuller use of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*; see Susan Irvine, "The Sources of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle MS E (Cameron B.17.9)," 2002, *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici: World Wide Web Register*, <http://fontes.english.ox.ac.uk/>.

and Horsa in 449).¹⁹ Collections of royal genealogies and lists of bishops were almost certainly used, as attested by the early-eighth-century collection found in London, BL, Cotton Vespasian B.vi, fols 104–109.²⁰ Barbara Yorke speculates that there may once have been a “List of Kings’ Resting-Places” that included information for both Mercian and West Saxon kings from which entries were made into the Chronicle text.²¹ It is likely that the West Saxon annals for the seventh and eighth centuries derived from annals kept somewhere in Wessex from around the mid-seventh century.²² An oral source may account for an entry such as the annal for 755 (discussed further below).

Although we can have a reasonably clear sense of the sources which underlie the Chronicle, it is more difficult to ascertain how many of the Chronicle’s sources were already combined in some form before Alfred’s reign, or whether any of the material was previously available in the vernacular. Linguistic evidence amassed by Janet Bately would seem to point away from the idea of a two-stage chronicle proposed by some scholars, in which the entry for 855 (the year of Æthelwulf’s death) marks the end of the first stage.²³ But in exactly what form the material became available to its Alfredian compiler(s), and how heavily it was edited with late-ninth-century reception in mind, are intriguing questions that remain unanswered. It is very possible, as Bately suggests, “that the raw material used in the compilation of the common stock consisted of a number of manuscripts of a variety of shapes and sizes.”²⁴

Evidence for Alfredian Production and Circulation

The close association between the Chronicle project and the political goals of the Alfredian era which have been discussed above indicates that the most

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- 19 On the use of Isidore, Rufinus and *De Viris*, see Janet M. Bately, “World History in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*: Its Sources and its Separateness from the Old English Orosius,” *ASE* 8 (1979): 177–194.
 - 20 See Kenneth Sisam, “Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies,” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 39 (1953): 287–348; David Dumville, “The Anglian Collection of Royal Genealogies and Regnal Lists,” *ASE* 5 (1976): 23–50; and Thomas A. Bredehoft, *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Toronto: 2001), 16–17.
 - 21 Barbara Yorke, “The Representation of Early West Saxon History in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,” in *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. Jorgensen, 142–159, at 153.
 - 22 See F.M. Stenton, “The Foundations of English History,” in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4th series, 9 (1926): 159–173; repr. in *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Stenton, 116–126, and Yorke, “The Representation of Early West Saxon History,” 159.
 - 23 Bately, “The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 60 BC to AD 890,” 98–116.
 - 24 Bately, “Manuscript Layout and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*,” 19.

likely context for the compilation of the Chronicle is Alfred's court and the circle of scholars who were active there during his reign. The production of the Chronicle fits well with the court-centred initiative to provide works in the vernacular through a programme of translation, and thereby to develop the use of English as a literary language. Also, more specifically, an association between the Chronicle and Alfred's court is implied by the fact that Asser, one of the scholars recruited by Alfred, used the Chronicle as a source for his own historical work, the *Life of King Alfred*, for which he drew on a copy extending to at least 887. Asser's use of the Chronicle would indicate that the work was put into circulation in some form or another in Alfred's reign.²⁵

Two other types of evidence, manuscript and linguistic, provide important information about the production and circulation of the Chronicle in Alfred's reign. The manuscript evidence suggests that an original compilation (the common stock) was produced and circulated between 890 and 892. Of the seven substantial extant versions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (known by the letters A to G),²⁶ the most important witness to the development of the Chronicle in Alfred's reign is A, otherwise known as the Parker Manuscript.²⁷ This is the oldest extant manuscript of the Chronicle (although its readings are not always closer to the original than those of the later versions):²⁸ it is copied in one late-ninth-century or very early-tenth-century hand up to near the end of the annal for 891 and continued afterwards in a series of hands. Attempts to interpret A's evidence have prompted scholarly controversy. Malcolm Parkes

25 The authenticity of Asser's *Life* is not accepted by all scholars. For the view that the *Life* was a late tenth-century forgery, see Alfred P. Smyth, *King Alfred the Great* (Oxford: 1995); and for a defense of Asser's authenticity, see, for example, Simon Keynes, "On the Authenticity of Asser's *Life of King Alfred*," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 47 (1996): 529–551.

26 The seven manuscripts are as follows: A. CCCC 173; B. London, BL, Cotton Tiberius A.vi; C. London, BL, Cotton Tiberius B.i; D. London, BL, Cotton Tiberius B.iv; E. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 636; F. London, BL, Cotton Domitian viii; G. London, BL, Cotton Otho B.xii. Manuscripts A–F are edited in ASCCE, as follows: Janet M. Bately (ed.), *MS A*, ASCCE 3 (Cambridge: 1986); Simon Taylor (ed.), *MS B*, ASCCE 4 (Cambridge: 1983); Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe (ed.), *MS C*, ASCCE 5 (Cambridge: 2001); G.P. Cubbin (ed.), *MS D*, ASCCE 6 (Cambridge: 1996); Susan Irvine (ed.), *MS E*, ASCCE 7 (Cambridge: 2004); Peter Baker, *MS F*, ASCCE 8 (Cambridge: 2000). For G, see Angelika Lutz (ed.), *Die Version G der Angelsächsischen Chronik: Rekonstruktion und Edition* (Munich: 1981).

27 The manuscript is available in facsimile in Robin Flower and A.H. Smith (eds.), *The Parker Chronicle and Laws* (*Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS. 173*), *A Facsimile*, EETS OS 208 (London: 1941; repr. 1973). The annal numbers cited in this chapter correspond to those in A unless otherwise stated.

28 See Bately, *MS A*, lxxiii–lxxxix; and Janet Bately, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Texts and Textual Relationships* (Reading: 1991).

has argued on mainly palaeographical grounds for an original compilation extending to 891, copied in A at the end of the ninth century by a scribe whose exemplar must have been close to the original.²⁹ The last part of the annal for 891 (wrongly dated 892) and subsequent entries, copied by a second scribe, all represent, in Parkes's view, supplements to the original compilation. For David Dumville, the palaeographical evidence suggests a different scenario. He favours a later date of early tenth century for the first scribe and suggests that both he and the second scribe were writing at the same time, with the latter beginning his copying with the last part of the annal for 891.³⁰ According to Dumville, the original compilation ran to the end of the annal for 892, and the scribal break in the middle of the annal for 891 does not correspond to any identifiable textual date.³¹

The view that the annal for 892 represents the end of the original compilation receives some support from other manuscripts and related works. The manuscript known as E, the Peterborough Chronicle, contains the annals up to 890 and the annal for 892, but lacks any of the subsequent annals pertaining to Alfred's reign. This might suggest that the original compilation extended to 892. It is curious, if so, that the annal for 891 is omitted from E, though it is certainly possible that it was accidentally lost in transmission. The textual evidence deriving from Æthelweard's *Chronicon*, a Latin version of the Chronicle produced in the late tenth century and extending up to the death of Edgar in 975, might seem to offer a similar picture.³² For the earlier period, its source was evidently not A itself nor a descendant of A but closer to A than other versions are, and included the annals up to and including 892, but not the annals for 893–896. The lack of clarity, however, in the relationship between the original compilation and the source that the *Chronicon* shared with A means that the *Chronicon*'s evidence has to be treated as uncertain.³³

Whether or not we accept that the original compilation extended as far as 892, Dumville's persuasive argument that the first scribe may have been writing after 900 means that the entry for 891 cannot be assumed to represent the final entry in the original compilation, leaving open the possibility that it

29 Parkes, "The Palaeography of the Parker Manuscript."

30 David N. Dumville, "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the Origins of English Square Minuscule Script," in his *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar: Six Essays on Political, Cultural, and Ecclesiastical Revival* (Woodbridge: 1986), 55–134.

31 Dumville, "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle," 89–90.

32 A. Campbell (ed.), *The Chronicle of Æthelweard* (London: 1962).

33 See Bately, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, esp. 41–53.

ended in either 890 or 892. Linguistic evidence brings further information to bear on the issue. An analysis of lexical and syntactic usages shows, Bately argues, that the original compilation extended at least up to 890, and possibly (though not necessarily) included the annal for 891 as well.³⁴ The annal for 892, the linguistic evidence would suggest, is probably to be considered as separate from preceding and subsequent annals.

The manuscript and linguistic evidence for the annals for 893–896 is less controversial. These annals were apparently a single continuation to the Chronicle, written by one chronicler in or soon after 896.³⁵ They offer a coherent continuous narrative, with distinctive stylistic traits (discussed further below). The annal for 896 may have been the last one composed in Alfred's reign. A further continuation, which extended from 897–914, was probably accumulated piecemeal early in the tenth century.³⁶

The evidence suggests that the production and circulation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle were firmly rooted in Alfred's reign. At least two chroniclers participated in this project, which may or may not have been commissioned by the king himself. The project entailed not only composing annals relating to the events of Alfred's reign but also collecting, rewriting and revising earlier material.³⁷ The aim was to compile a vernacular account of the English nation which would both complement and extend the historiographical tradition established by Bede in his *Historia Ecclesiastica* and emulate the "official" annalistic activity at the Carolingian court. The Chronicle undoubtedly contributed to the formulation of a national identity and the emergence of a literary vernacular culture in late-ninth-century Anglo-Saxon England.³⁸ The relationship between individual annals or sets of annals and the Chronicle as a whole, however, and the meanings that can be derived from their style and content, are far from straightforward, as we shall see.

34 Janet Bately, "The Compilation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Once More," *LSE* n.s. 16 (1985): 7–26.

35 Bately, "The Compilation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Once More," 17–19, argues that the latter parts of the annal for 896 are composed by other hands.

36 K&L, 280.

37 Bately, "The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 60 BC to AD 890," 129.

38 On the interaction of past and present which is indicated by the scribal responses in manuscript A, see Neville, "Making Their Own Sweet Time." On the role of the Chronicle poems in developing a national identity, see Thormann, "The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Poems." For the longevity of the Chronicle in terms of the political and historiographical concerns of the ninth to twelfth centuries, see, for example, Bredehoft, *Textual Histories*, and Alice Sheppard, *Families of the King: Writing Identity in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Toronto: 2004).

A Preface to the Chronicle: The Genealogical and Regnal List

Manuscript A of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle opens with a West Saxon genealogical and regnal list which takes up the whole of its first page.³⁹ The list begins by recording the arrival of Cerdic and his son Cynric at “Cerdicesora,” followed by a genealogy of Cerdic as far back as Woden. It then reports that Cerdic and Cynric conquered the kingdom of the West Saxons six years after their arrival. All the kings from Cerdic to Alfred are named, with the length of their reigns given in each case and also regular reminders of their descent from Cerdic. Æthelwulf’s genealogy is given in full, and the list ends with the succession of Alfred.

This genealogical and regnal list acts as a preface to this version of the Chronicle. As Chapter 5 above shows, Alfredian prefaces shaped the way the work itself might be read and interpreted.⁴⁰ In this case, first of all, the preface draws attention to the West Saxon dynasty, which offered a continuous succession of kings from Cerdic to Alfred. Though the range of the Chronicle itself extends across the various Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, the West Saxon genealogical and regnal list with which it opens establishes the paramount importance of the dynasty springing from Cerdic. The list allows for no doubt as to the contemporary political backdrop against which Anglo-Saxon history was to be read. It enhances the role of Cerdic in the Chronicle as a whole and makes the annals in which his activities are recorded more meaningful.⁴¹ It also celebrates the reign of Alfred: “Pa feng Ælfred hiera broþur to rice, ond þa was agan his ielde . xxiii. wintra ond . ccc. ond . xcvi. wintra þæs þe his cyn ærest Westseaxna lond on Wealum geeodon.”⁴² The structural symmetry of the preface—the reference at both beginning and end to the conquering of the land of the West Saxons from the Britons—emphasises that the West Saxon dynasty is to be seen as culminating in Alfred’s reign.

The presence of the list at the opening of the Parker Manuscript also invests the work as a whole with the authority implicit in such genealogical and regnal tables. These tables circulated in a variety of contexts, and it is likely that the West Saxon genealogical and regnal list, in approximately its current form, existed independently before the Chronicle itself was

39 A single leaf, now London, BL, Cotton Tiberius A.iii, fol. 178, contains a version of the genealogical and regnal list which originally followed the text of B.

40 See above, 143–170.

41 Neville, “Making Their Own Sweet Time,” 169–171.

42 Bately, *MS A*, 2 (with “ond” for the tironian sign and “æ” for e-caudata): “Then their brother Alfred succeeded to the kingdom, and then 23 years of his life had passed and 396 years from when his race first conquered the land of the West-Saxons from the Britons.”

compiled.⁴³ The list, placed in pride of place at the head of the Chronicle, situates the work within a framework of authoritative historical record.

The genealogical and regnal list also draws attention to the Chronicle's vernacular discourse. This is seen in its use of the alliterative and metrical structures characteristic of Old English verse. Anglo-Saxon genealogies, with their plethora of alliterating names, lent themselves to this kind of patterning, and the verse form of some sequences, Kenneth Sisam argues, may even have been maintained by the importing of names from legendary tradition: the perfect verse pedigree represented by the Cerdic to Woden sequence may be "wholly or partly fictitious."⁴⁴ Thomas Bredehoft, arguing that the chronicler's inclusion of the genealogies in their alliterating form (both in the list and in the annals) must be seen as a conscious choice, suggests that they were used to indicate political legitimacy.⁴⁵ It is also conceivable that the links they evoked to a wider tradition of composition in the vernacular may have appealed to a compiler. The use of alliterative and metrical forms, combined perhaps with the interweaving of regnal list and genealogy, reflect a kind of literary crafting which implicitly connects the Chronicle to vernacular heroic poetry such as *Beowulf* (whose own prologue heavily emphasises ancestry). By alerting the reader to a tradition of vernacular composition, the poetic structures in the genealogical and regnal list at the beginning of MS A can be seen to contribute to the promotion of an "English" identity which, as we have seen, was an integral part of the Chronicle's narrative.

The Annals up to A.D. 890 (Except for 755)

For the first five hundred years or so of its record (beginning in 60 B.C.) the Chronicle offers mainly a scattering of annals covering events outside Britain—the "world history" annals—as well as a small number of annals dealing with events in Britain. From A.D. 455 (the date of Hengest's accession) onwards, the Chronicle focuses almost exclusively on British history. All the annals up to 890, however, are characterized alike by their plainness of style (with the exception

43 See Sisam, "Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies," 332–334, and David Dumville, "The West Saxon Genealogical Regnal List and the Chronology of Early Wessex," *Peritia* 4 (1985): 21–66, repr. in his *Britons and Anglo-Saxons in the Early Middle Ages* (Aldershot: 1993), item VIII. Bredehoft, *Textual Histories*, 14–38, makes a case for a significant input on the part of the common stock compiler.

44 See Sisam, "Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies," 301.

45 Bredehoft, *Textual Histories*, 32–33.

of the annal for 755, discussed separately below). The world history annals, drawing on Isidore's *Chronicon*, Rufinus' translation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, the *Liber Pontificalis*, and Jerome's *De Viris Illustribus*,⁴⁶ are particularly spare in the information they offer and stylistically terse throughout. The entries, generally no more than three or four lines long, have the character of a brief note; some contain as few as four words, such as the annals for 39 ("Her onfeng Gaius rice") and 110 ("Her Ignatus biscep þrowode").⁴⁷ The annals relating to Britain (60 B.C. and A.D. 46, 167, 189, 381, 409, 430, and 449), whose source is Bede's *Epitome*, are similarly unexpansive. One of the more substantial entries for these years is that for 418, for which no source has been identified: "Her Romane gesomnodon al þe goldhord þe on Bretene wæron ond sume on eorþan ahyddon þæt hie nænig mon siþþan findan ne meahte ond sume mid him on Gallia læddon."⁴⁸ If the writer is rueful at the loss of this gold-hoard, the sentiment, like any other response to events in these annals, is left unspoken.

The annals relating to events in Anglo-Saxon England for the years after 449 and up to 890, though they become more frequent and sometimes longer (particularly from the end of the eighth century onwards), are similarly characterized by stylistic restraint.⁴⁹ The annals for 671 to 673, for example, are typically terse and matter-of-fact:

AN. .dclxxi. Her wæs þæt micle fugla wæl.

AN. .dclxxii. Her forþferde Cenwalh, on Seaxburg an gear ricsode his cuen æfter him.

AN. .dclxxiii. Her Ecgbryht Cantwara cyning forþferde. Ond þy geare wæs senoð æt Heorotforda; ond Sancte Æpeldryht ongon þæt mynster æt Elige.⁵⁰

Vocabulary, of both individual words and phrases, tends to be repetitive, and adjectives and adverbs are rarely used. Information is conveyed in sentences

46 See above and Bately, "World History."

47 Bately, *MS A*, 4, "In this year Gaius succeeded to the kingdom," and 7, "In this year Bishop Ignatius was martyred."

48 Bately, *MS A*, 16: "In this year the Romans collected all the treasures in Britain and hid some in the earth so that no-one could find them afterwards and took some with them into Gaul."

49 See Janet M. Bately, "Old English Prose Before and During the Reign of Alfred," *ASE* 17 (1988): 93–138; and Clark, "The Narrative Mode," 216–221.

50 Bately, *MS A*, 31: "[671] In this year there was the great mortality of birds. [672] In this year Cenwalh died and his queen Seaxburh reigned for one year after him. [673] In this year Ecgbryht, king of the Kentish people died. And in that year there was a synod at Herford; and St. Æthelthryth founded the monastery at Ely."

comprising a series of simple clauses, paratactically linked to one another. Comment on events or people is extremely rare. Just occasionally the sense of a mind interpreting and imagining as it records can be glimpsed. So, for example, in the entry for 457, the Britons abandon Kent and flee to London “mid micle ege.”⁵¹ In the entry for 473, the Britons, according to the chronicle, “flugon þa Englan swa þær fyr.”⁵² The simile is emphasised by the use of alliteration.⁵³ The annal for 584 records that Ceawlin returned to his own land “ierre,” and the annal for 750 refers dismissively to Æthelhun as “ofermedan.”⁵⁴ In the annal for 823, the people of Kent and Surrey along with the South and East Saxons submit to Ecgbryht because they had previously been forced away from his kinsmen “mid unryhte.”⁵⁵ In the annal for 855, the chronicler reports the joy of the people at Æthelwulf’s return, and in the annal for 874, Ceolwulf, who received Mercia in that year, is described as “anum unwisum cyninges þegne.”⁵⁶ The annal for 860 praises the five-year reign of Æthelberht who held the kingdom “on godre geþuærnesse ond on micelre sibsumnesse.”⁵⁷

Although these deviations stand out from the normally dispassionate stance and formulaic use of language of the Chronicle entries, they cannot necessarily be assumed to be independent interventions by a compiler. Instead, as Bately has suggested, they may reflect the variety of kinds of sources from which the Chronicle was compiled.⁵⁸ Equally uncertain evidence comes from comments in annals which imply a retrospective view in keeping with composition or intervention by a chronicler writing well after the event. The entry for 851, for example, tells us that Æthelwulf and his son Æthelbald, fighting at Aclea with the West Saxon army, inflicted the greatest slaughter on a heathen army “þe we secgan hierdon oþ þisne ondweardan dæg.”⁵⁹ This implies a time of composition considerably later than the date of the event itself and could arguably indicate either the work of a later (perhaps Alfredian) compiler or a revision of existing material.⁶⁰ The entry for 789 ends with a comment by the

51 Bately, *MS A*, 18: “with great fear.”

52 Bately, *MS A*, 18: “fled from the English like fire.”

53 The entries for 491 and 501 similarly exploit alliteration; see Bately, *MS A*, 19 and 20. An ultimately poetic, oral source may be indicated; see Bately, “The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 60 BC to AD 890,” 103.

54 Bately, *MS A*, 24, “angry,” and 36, “arrogant.”

55 Bately, *MS A*, 41: “unrightly.”

56 Bately, *MS A*, 49: “a foolish king’s thegn.”

57 Bately, *MS A*, 46: “in good harmony and in great peace.”

58 Bately, “The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 60 BC to AD 890,” 102–103.

59 Bately, *MS A*, 44: “that we heard tell of up to this present day.”

60 See Bately, “The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 60 BC to AD 890,” 112 n.4.

chronicler who, with the benefit of hindsight, emphasises the future momentous impact of the Danish invasions: "Pæt wæron þa ærestan scipu deniscra monna þe Angelcynnes lond gesohton."⁶¹ Although this may merely reflect a date of composition rather later than 789, it also may have the character of an editorial intervention, prompted by an earlier use of "ærest" in the same annal, to spell out the implications of the arrival of these three ships for the English people. Again the evidence has to be considered inconclusive.

The stylistic homogeneity of the entries in fact makes it extremely difficult to distinguish any one author or compiler from another in relation to whole annals or parts of annals. On lexical and syntactic grounds, Bately has shown that in the case of the annals up to 855, "the majority of variations between annals and groups of annals are either paralleled elsewhere in unitary texts or are of a type that is not necessarily incompatible with the theory of a single compiler or translator."⁶² Only three can be identified as showing lexical links with the work of the Alfredian compiler who was responsible for the annals centring on the 870s (the "first Alfredian annalist"): the annals for 755 (Cynewulf and Cyneheard), 835 (Ecgbryht's success in battle against the Danes and Welsh) and 855 (the death of King Æthelwulf).⁶³ The lexical evidence, however, may belie a much more complex picture if several compilers were at work on the revision of earlier material.

The evidence of content as well as style may be revealing. Some of the annals contain subject-matter which looks more relevant to Alfred's reign than to any other context. These annals may have been part of a process of selection, if not of composition, undertaken by the Alfredian compilers. The story of Alfred's royal anointing as a young boy by Pope Leo in the annal for 853 is one example.⁶⁴ The various royal genealogies, predominantly West Saxon in focus, confer legitimacy on Alfred's kingship.⁶⁵ The annal for 718, Yorke argues, is anomalous in relation to other Chronicle entries.⁶⁶ The annal records the death of Ingild, Ine's brother, a figure whose non-violent death would justify mention only because of his importance to the descent of Alfred and his family. The reference in the same annal to Cwenburh and Cuthburh, Ingild's and

61 Bately, *MS A*, 39: "Those were the first ships of Danish men which came to the land of the English people."

62 Bately, "The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 60 BC to AD 890," 103.

63 Bately, "The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 60 BC to AD 890," 111–113.

64 On the various interpretations of this story, see, for example, Nelson, *Rulers and Ruling Families*, item VI, and K&L, 232 n.19.

65 See above, 353–354.

66 Yorke, "The Representation of Early West Saxon History," 150–151.

Ine's sisters, is also unusual amongst the seventh-and eighth-century annals given that they were not queens of Wessex. Cuthburh's marriage to Aldferth of Northumbria, according to Yorke, "could be seen as enhancing the standing of the family or as recording a link with Northumbria that might be relevant to Alfred's attempt to forge diplomatic links with the province."⁶⁷ Yorke suggests that the annal for 718 and some other sets of annals, records of the burial places of kings and of visits to Rome which would have been of particular interest in Alfred's reign, may have been added to the Chronicle by the Alfredian compilers.

The evidence, notoriously difficult as it is to glean from the unadorned prose style of the annals, suggests that much of the process of compilation of the common stock of the Chronicle, and at least some of the process of composition too, took place in Alfred's reign. It is likely that the compilers, and indeed the readers, of this vernacular work saw the events portrayed therein as relating to and commenting on the contemporary political context. Such an interaction between past and present perhaps informs the entry for 755, which is the subject of the next section.

The Annal for 755: Cynewulf and Cyneheard

The story of Cynewulf and Cyneheard in the annal for 755 offers the most striking example of a departure from the Chronicle's characteristic brevity and terseness. It records in some detail the circumstances leading up to an attack by the Ætheling Cyneheard on King Cynewulf at Meretun where he is in the company of a woman. The king's spirited defence, which results in his death, attracts the attention of his men, to whom Cyneheard offers a deal (money and life). They refuse to accept it and are all killed (except for one, a British hostage). More of Cynewulf's men, having heard of their king's death, arrive at Meretun where Cyneheard is ensconced. Cyneheard then proposes to them a deal (money and land) in return for accepting his kingship, which they similarly reject, offering a safe passage to their kinsmen who are with Cyneheard. The kinsmen reject this offer of life, just as Cynewulf's men had previously done. Cynewulf's men break into the stronghold and kill Cyneheard and all but one of his men. The entry ends by recording the length of Cynewulf's reign, the burial-places of Cynewulf and Cyneheard, their shared descent from Cerdic, the death of the Mercian king Æthelbald, his burial-place, the respective successions of Beornred, Offa and Ecgferth, and the ancestry of Offa.

67 Yorke, "The Representation of Early West Saxon History," 150.

This is undoubtedly a fascinating and provocative entry, possibly deriving from an oral source.⁶⁸ In its length and detail it stands out sharply from other entries up to this point and well beyond it. Although the record is an entry for 755, its main focus is actually an event which occurred in 784. A more succinct account is offered by the entry for 784 itself: "Her Cyneheard ofslog Cynewulf cyning, ond he þær wearþ ofslægen ond .lxxxiiii. monna mid him."⁶⁹ In recording the number of men killed, this entry supplies a detail not found in the entry for 755.

Notwithstanding its distinctiveness, the 755 annal has apparently been composed to fit stylistically within its Chronicle context. Like the annals more generally, it relies heavily on paratactic sentence constructions to maintain a sense of objectivity. Its style is plain, with adjectives and adverbs kept to a minimum. The economy of style entails a piling-up of pronouns which obscures the narrative sequence. Explicit comment on the events is kept to a minimum: Sigebryht is deprived of his kingdom "for unryhtum dædum," Cynewulf defends himself "unheanlice," and Beornred rules "ungefealice."⁷⁰ The writer leaves open the interpretation of the narrative, to the extent that we cannot be sure whose behaviour is to be viewed as more admirable. The traditional view that sees Cynewulf and his men as the representatives of noble conduct cannot be taken for granted.⁷¹

One of the most extraordinary aspects of this entry is the way it conveys such a range of meanings despite its economical style. The passage derives a sense of urgency from its insistent use of verbs denoting action: "ofslog" (killed), "adræfde" (drove out), "ofstang" (stabbed), "feagt" (fought), "adræfan" (to drive out), "berad" (overtook by riding), "beeode" (surrounded), "eode" (went), "hine werede" (defended himself), "ræsde" (rushed), "gewundode" (wounded), "wærun feohtende" (were fighting), "urnon" (ran), "feohtende wæran" (were fighting), "ridon" (rode), "eodon" (went), "feohtende wæron" (were fighting), "fulgon" (penetrated), and "ofslogon" (killed). The way that the perspective constantly oscillates between the two sides also contributes to this sense of urgency. Direct speech is used to dramatize the narrative: "Þa cuædon hie þæt hie hie þæs ne onmunden 'þon ma þe eowre geferan þe mid þam cyninge ofslægene wærun.'"⁷² The stylistic device draws attention to the crucial role of dialogue in the unfolding of events.

68 See, for example, R.W. McTurk, "'Cynewulf and Cyneheard' and the Icelandic Sagas," *LSE* n.s. 12 (1981): 81–127.

69 Bately, *MS A*, 39: "In this year Cyneheard killed King Cynewulf, and he and 84 men with him were killed there."

70 Bately, *MS A*, 36–37: "because of unrighteous deeds," "nobly," and "unhappily."

71 Bredehoft, for example, argues against this view in *Textual Histories*, 53–59.

72 Bately, *MS A*, 37: "Then they said that they would not pay regard to that 'any more than did your comrades who were killed along with the king'."

Central to this annal are the values placed on different kinds of bonds, those between members of a family and those between lord and retainer. Kinship binds a number of the participants. Cynewulf is related to Sigebryht, whose unrighteous deeds lead Cynewulf to depose him. Cyneheard, Sigebryht's brother, becomes embroiled in conflict with Cynewulf, with whom he shares paternal ancestry.⁷³ Both Cyneheard and Cynewulf offer safe passage to their kinsmen who are amongst the other's retainers, and both groups of kinsmen refuse. The power of the bonds between lord and retainer emerges most prominently in relation to the loyalty of Cynewulf's and Cyneheard's retainers. Cynewulf's retainers rush to avenge their king's death: first those who are with him and then a back-up band of retainers who arrive the next day. Both Cynewulf's and Cyneheard's retainers would rather die than serve a lord responsible for their lord's death. The privileging of the lord-retainer bond above all others is given expression by Cynewulf's men: "ond þa cuædon hie þæt him nænig mæg leofra nære þonne hiera hlaford ond hie næfre his banan folgian noldon."⁷⁴ A violation of the lord-retainer bond is presented in Sigebryht's murder of his loyal nobleman Cumbra.

The ways in which ideals can be epitomized by actions is explored through parallels between different parts of the episode. Cynewulf's bravery in defending himself single-handedly (if rashly) against Cyneheard is contrasted with Cyneheard's cowardice (but strategic shrewdness) in attacking him while he is unguarded in the company of a woman ("on wifcyppe").⁷⁵ Offers of rewards or safe passage are made and consistently refused. In each battle one man from the losing side survives. Disloyalty of various kinds—Sigebryht to his nobleman Cumbra, Cyneheard to his king Cynewulf—is set against the loyalty shown by Cumbra, the swineheard who avenges his killing, and the retainers of Cynewulf and of Cyneheard. Both sets of retainers ultimately prize the bond they have with their lord more than the bond they have with their kin.

73 Rolf H. Bremmer Jr, "The Germanic Context of 'Cynewulf and Cyneheard' Revisited," *Neophilologus* 81 (1997): 445–465, argues that they are paternal uncle and nephew, in which case Sigebryht is presumably also Cynewulf's nephew.

74 Bately, *MS A*, 37: "and then they said that no kinsman was dearer to them than their lord and they would never follow his slayer."

75 T.A. Shippey, "Boar and Badger: An Old English Heroic Antithesis?" *LSE*, n.s. 16 (1985): 220–239, compares Cynewulf's rash action with Byrhtnoth's in *The Battle of Maldon*. The implications of the much discussed phrase "in wifcyppe" seem to me to lie more in the contrast between Cynewulf's and Cyneheard's modes of engaging in battle than in Cynewulf's moral weakness. See also Karen Ferro, "The King in the Doorway: The 'Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', A.D. 755," *Kings and Kingship, Acta* 11 (1986 (for 1984)): 17–30.

Bately has argued that this annal in its final form may have been the work of the “first Alfredian annalist” who was probably also responsible for the annals for 835 and 855 as well as for the annals centred on the 870s.⁷⁶ If this case is accepted, what then are the implications for an interpretation of the 755 annal? The complexity of the political issues, analysed by Stephen White,⁷⁷ indicates how difficult it is to identify the particular significance of a retrospective retelling of a mid-eighth-century event for the very different political culture of the late ninth century. As Alice Sheppard has acknowledged, the practice of lordship in the Cynewulf-Cyneheard episode, with the deaths of both claimants to the throne, “cannot serve as an identifying culture for Alfred’s new kingdom.”⁷⁸ The attention given to this episode by the chronicler may, however, be a consequence of its implications from an Alfredian perspective for the principles of dynastic succession. The import, suggests Bredehoft, “lies in an attempt to promote a West Saxon dynasty of Æthelwulf’s line.”⁷⁹ The annal compiler may then, as Yorke has argued, have in mind a contrast between the past ways in which succession disputes were resolved and the ninth-century recognition of the primacy of kingship over other forms of lordship. She emphasises the link between the annal for 755 and that for 855: “Taken together the two annals stress the unsuitability of Alfred’s West Saxon predecessors to rule (and perhaps of systems of succession in existence at the time) and the superiority of Æthelwulf and his descendants.”⁸⁰

It may also be useful to read the annal for 755 in conjunction with the entry for 871, the year of Alfred’s accession to the throne. In this latter annal too, a series of conflicts crucial to the control of the West Saxon kingdom gives way to a resolution which follows on from the death of a king. But the entry for 871 presents a series of events in which kin are fighting against a common enemy rather than against each other. Alfred succeeds his brother, alongside whom he was fighting, to the West Saxon throne. The two annals portray contrasting pictures of dynastic succession.

The annal for 755 sets itself up as an historical record but in its literary treatment of the events seems rather detached from the political realities

76 Bately, “The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 60 BC to AD 890,” 111–113.

77 Stephen D. White, “Kinship and Lordship in Early Medieval England: The Story of Sigebert, Cynewulf, and Cyneheard,” *Viator* 20 (1989): 1–18; repr. in *Old English Literature*, ed. Liuzza, 157–181. For an interesting recent interpretation of the annal in the light of its Alfredian context, see Francis Leneghan, “Royal Wisdom and the Alfredian Context of *Cynewulf and Cyneheard*,” *ASE* 39 (2010): 71–104.

78 Sheppard, *Families of the King*, 38.

79 See Bredehoft, *Textual Histories*, 58–59.

80 Yorke, “The Representation of Early West Saxon History,” 148.

underlying them. The first Alfredian annalist, if he was responsible for this annal as well as those centring on the 870s, presents a somewhat romanticized view of the past in which the ideal of loyalty to one's lord above loyalty to one's kin is articulated. In putting the story where it does not strictly belong, that is in the annal for 755 rather than the annal for 784, the annalist shows an awareness of how annals may have relevance and meaning within broader chronological contexts. Even as he celebrates the heroic ideal of the Cynewulf and Cyneheard story, the annalist acknowledges, through implicit parallels with other later annals, its limitations in relation to the very different political culture operating in the latter part of the ninth century.

The Annals for 891–896

As we have seen, the annals for 891 and 892 were perhaps produced separately not only from each other but also from the preceding and subsequent annals. The annal for 891 begins with a brief record of the victory of Arnulf, king of eastern Francia, against the Danes. It then dwells on the voyage of the Irishmen to King Alfred's court, describing their motivation for travelling ("hi woldon for Godes lufan on elþiodignesse beon, hi ne rohton hwær") as well as the details of the boat and the journey, and also on the names by which a comet is known:

Ond þy ilcan geare ofer Eastron, ymbe gangdagas oþþe ær, æteowde se steorra þe mon on boclæden hæst cometa: sume men cwepað on englisce þæt hit sie feaxede steorra, forþæm þær stent lang leoma of, hwilum on ane healfe, hwilum on ælce healfe.⁸¹

This interest in the comet can be compared to the concern with different kinds of stars, and the expanded treatments of Boethius's astronomical references more generally, in the Old English *Boethius*.⁸² Astronomy may well have been a

81 Bately, *MS A*, 54–55: "They wished because of love for God to be in a foreign country, they did not care where...And in that same year after Easter, around the Rogation days or earlier, the star appeared which is called 'cometa' in Latin: some men say in English that it is the haired star, because a long ray extends from it, sometimes on one side, sometimes on each side" (last part of the annal dated 892 in A through scribal alteration).

82 Malcolm Godden and Susan Irvine (eds.), *The Old English Boethius: An Edition of the Old English Versions of Boethius's De Consolatione Philosophiae*, 2 vols. (Oxford: 2009), B Chapter 4 (cf. C Metre 4), Chapter 36 (cf. C Metre 24), and Chapter 39 (cf. C Metres 28

topic pursued in discussions amongst scholars at Alfred's court: personal observation or knowledge of Pliny's *Historia Naturalis* perhaps prompted the comment here.⁸³

The exact status of the annal for 891, and also that of 892, in relation to the common stock is, as we have seen, a matter of some debate. On the basis of linguistic evidence, Bately argues that the annal for 891 may not have taken final shape until after the copying and circulation of the original compilation had begun, and that the annal for 892 should be treated as independent from both the preceding and subsequent annals.⁸⁴ The annal for 892 begins with a linking phrase—"se micla here þe we gefyrn ymbe spræcon"—which is unusual in the Chronicle.⁸⁵ Possibly, however, this merely acknowledges the fact that material on other subjects had intervened between this record and the previous one relating to the Danish army at the opening of the annal for 891. The way that the phrase—arguably superfluously—draws attention to this annal's link to previous annals may support the view that it was produced independently of them.

The annals for 893–896, unlike those for 891 and 892, are a coherent group apparently composed first as a single continuous narrative, then adjusted to make them fit roughly into the existing Chronicle framework.⁸⁶ Their coherence as a group is particularly evident in the ways in which they look backwards and forwards, both within entries and across entries. Thus, for example, the annal for 893 begins: "On þys geare, þæt wæs ymb twelf monað þæs þe hie on þæm eastrice geweorc geworht hæfdon."⁸⁷ The use of the pronoun "hie" alone to identify the Danes assumes a link with previous material, although, curiously, this fortification is not itself mentioned earlier in the Chronicle.⁸⁸ The phrase "swa ic ær sæde" in the 893 annal refers to an event reported earlier in that annal, and at the end of the same annal the more recent events are again put in context: "On þæt wæs ymb twelf monað þæs þe hie ær hider ofer sæ comon."⁸⁹

and 29). As Bately notes ("The Compilation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Once More," 11), two references to comets in earlier Chronicle entries (for 678 and 729) offer no explanation of the native name nor the reason for it.

83 K&L, 283.

84 Bately, "The Compilation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Once More," 12 and 18.

85 Bately, *MS A*, 55: "the great army which we spoke about before"; see Bately, "The Compilation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Once More," 18–19; and K&L, 283.

86 Bately, "The Compilation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Once More," 15.

87 Bately, *MS A*, 55: "In this year, which was about twelve months after they had built the fortification in the eastern kingdom..."

88 K&L, 285.

89 Bately, *MS A*, 57: "as I said before"; 58: "And that was about twelve months after they had come here from across the sea."

The annal for 894 begins with a reference to the previous annal—"Ond þa sona æfter þæm on ðys gere..."—and both this annal and the one for 895 close with a retrospective glance reflecting the end of the annal for 893: "Pæt wæs ymb twa ger þæs þe hie hider ofer sæ comon," and "Pæt wæs ymb þreo ger þæs þe hie on Limene muðan comon hider ofer sæ."⁹⁰

The annals for 893–896 are particularly full and detailed, offering a clear and vivid account of the last wars of Alfred. Although they continue to present an objective perspective in keeping with the Chronicle context, their author shows a new awareness of, and a willingness to exploit, the stylistic potential of the vernacular. Their syntax makes full use of subordinate clauses, moving away from the consistent paratactic constructions of the early entries.⁹¹ In particular, as Bately observes, they make frequent use of "faran" or "gan" followed by "(oþ)-þæt," and often with "gedon" in the subordinate clause.⁹² The chronicler also frequently uses subordinate clauses to pursue his interest in analysing the motivation behind events.⁹³ Other aspects of their syntax which are distinctive include the tendency for main clauses to begin with the verb, and their use of correlative "þa...þa..." ("when...then...").⁹⁴ Clark has noted the high level of rhetorical patterning in the annals for 893–896. This is particularly evident in the use of parallel clauses linked by repetition or by connecting adverbs or conjunctions generally.⁹⁵ The first part of the annal for 893 includes a number of such balanced clauses: the Northumbrians and East Anglians go with the Danish armies "oþþe mid oþþe on heora healfe an"; Alfred chooses a site convenient "for wudufæstenne ond for wæterfæstenne"; the Danes are pursued every day "[oþþe on dæg] oþþe on niht, ge of þære fierde ge eac of þæm burgum"; the king's division of his army meant that there were "healfe æt ham, healfe ute"; the enemy did not emerge more than twice, "oþre siþe þa hie ærest to londe comon, ær sio fierd gesamnod wære, oþre siþe þa hie of þæm setum faran woldon."⁹⁶

90 Bately, *MS A*, 58: "And then immediately after that in this year..."; 59: "That was about two years from when they came here from over the sea," and "that was about three years after they came here to the estuary of the Limen from across the sea."

91 See Clark, "The Narrative Mode," 221–222.

92 Bately, "The Compilation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Once More," 12–13.

93 Clark, "The Narrative Mode," 223.

94 Bately, "The Compilation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Once More," 13.

95 Clark, "The Narrative Mode," 222.

96 Bately, *MS A*, 55–56: "either with them or on their own behalf"; "both to the stronghold in the wood and the stronghold by the water"; "either by day or by night, both from the English army and also from the burhs" ("[oþþe on dæg]" supplied by C and D); "half at home, half on service"; "once when they first landed, before the English army was assembled, and once when they wished to depart from those encampments."

If a different annalist was responsible for the third part of 896, as Bately has argued,⁹⁷ then it is curious to find him similarly revelling in the patterns that balancing parallel clauses can produce, as exemplified by the following passage describing the “long ships” commissioned by Alfred:

Pa het Ælfred cyng timbran langscipu ongen ða æscas. Ða wæron fulneah tu swa lange swa þa oðru. Sume hæfdon .lx. ara, sume ma. Ða wæron ægðer ge swiftran ge unwealtran ge eac hieran þonne þa oðru; næron nawðer ne on fresisc gescæpene ne on denisc, bute swa him selfum ðuhte þæt hie nytwyrðoste beon meahten.⁹⁸

Here we see a range of phrases setting up parallels and oppositions: “swa... swa...,” “sume...sume...,” “ægðer ge...ge...ge eac...,” and “nawðer ne...ne.” The heightened use of rhetorical embellishment draws particular attention to the new ships which will play such a crucial role in Alfred’s military strategy.

The brief annal for 897, like the entry for 900 which acts as Alfred’s obituary, is part of a continuation of the Chronicle extending from 897–914 and focusing on the attempt by Edward the Elder to take control of the Danelaw.⁹⁹ Only after death, in the annal for 900, is Alfred explicitly referred to as king of all the English people: “se wæs cyning ofer eall Ongelcyn butan ðæm dæle þe under Dena onwalde wæs.”¹⁰⁰ The Chronicle, the vernacular record of the history of the Anglo-Saxons produced and circulated originally under Alfred’s watch, itself played a not insignificant part in promoting the idea of Englishness which is given expression in this annal.

The Chronicle after Alfred’s Reign

Following its compilation and dissemination in Alfred’s reign, the Chronicle continued to be maintained for over 250 years, reflecting and enhancing the

97 Bately, “The Compilation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Once More,” 17–19. A different annalist may of course have been interested in producing the same kinds of stylistic effects as his predecessor.

98 Bately, *MS A*, 60: “Then King Alfred ordered ‘long ships’ to be built to oppose the Danish ships. Those were very nearly twice as long as the others. Some had sixty oars, some more. They were both swifter and steadier and also higher than the others; they were built neither on the Frisian nor the Danish pattern, but as it seemed to him himself that they could be most useful.”

99 K&L, 280.

100 Bately, *MS A*, 61: “He was king over all the English people except for that part that was under Danish rule.”

idea of an English nation which took hold firmly during the tenth century. But the Chronicle's development after Alfred's death presents a complex picture. The exact context for the production of annals remains unknown.¹⁰¹ Wherever or however these successor annals were written and disseminated, the extant manuscript evidence points to the ever-expanding multiplicity of forms taken by the Chronicle.

The various versions of the Chronicle intersect in all kinds of ways.¹⁰² In some cases, shared sources have led to close textual relationships. So, for example, B and C are closely connected textually with each another, both sharing many minor readings; the annals for 957, 971, and 977 which do not appear elsewhere; and also the Mercian Register (a set of entries for the years 902–924 focusing on Æthelflæd, wife of Æthelred and later ruler of Mercia in her own right). Similarly, D and E have close links with each other: both derive their annals up to 890 not from the common stock as it is represented in A, B, and C, but from a common ancestor containing the so-called northern recension of the Chronicle, which is distinguished from other versions of the Chronicle mainly by its additional material (taken from Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* and sets of Latin Northumbrian annals) relating to northern regions of Anglo-Saxon England.

In other cases connections between manuscripts emerge through scribal annotations and interventions. These also give us a fascinating insight into the reception of the Chronicle after Alfred's reign. Amongst its many scribal alterations, A received, in the late eleventh century, a number of erasures and additions at the hands of the scribe of F, who was attempting to bring it in line with the archetype of the Peterborough Chronicle (E). The F-scribe abandoned the project of altering A at around the entry for 616, perhaps in order to focus on his bilingual chronicle project.¹⁰³

101 It is generally assumed that successor annals and sets of annals were produced at particular ecclesiastical centres by individual annalists working independently. For an alternative model of continued central annalistic production by priests of the royal household, see Nicholas Brooks, "Why is the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle About Kings?" *ASE* 39 (2011): 43–70.

102 For the sigla cited here, see n. 26 above. For a recent diagrammatic representation of the relationship between the common stock and the extant manuscripts of the Chronicle, see Simon Keynes, "Manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*," in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Volume 1: c.400–1100*, ed. Richard Gameson (Cambridge: 2012), 537–552, at 542.

103 For the entries up to 616, another manuscript G (London, BL, Cotton Otho B.xi), a copy of A made in the early eleventh century before it was subjected to alteration by the F scribe, is an important witness to A's original readings. See David Dumville, "Some Aspects of Annalistic Writing at Canterbury in the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries," *Peritia* 2 (1983): 23–57, at 43–44.

Notwithstanding the many connections between the versions of the Chronicle, their distinctiveness from one another should also be acknowledged. In terms of chronological scope, E is the only version to continue to provide entries beyond 1079, extending about three-quarters of a century further than any other manuscript (including two continuations covering 1122–31 and 1132–54 respectively). The sole surviving evidence elsewhere for the continued writing of annals in the vernacular after 1079 is a single leaf containing parts of annals for 1113–14 (known as H), whose contents are entirely independent of the corresponding annals in E.¹⁰⁴ Distinctive political agendas can be identified in the various versions of the Chronicle, such as the bias which emerges in C's mid-eleventh-century annals towards Leofric of Mercia and against Earl Godwine,¹⁰⁵ and the promotion of Peterborough evident in the interpolations based on forged charters in E. Linguistically, F stands out as a bilingual version of the Chronicle.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle was an extraordinarily ambitious project which both reflected and enhanced the political environment within which it was conceived. Its continued existence and development as a vernacular record of the history of the English people attest to the success of Alfred's political and intellectual goals. The many forms that the Chronicle would eventually take could not have been envisaged at the end of the ninth century, but in the evidence it provides for the lasting legacy of Alfred's reign we can perhaps be reassured that it would not have been viewed as the Hydra-like monster in the *OE Boethius*, spawning (coincidentally) seven heads for each one chopped off:

Swa swa mon on ealdspellum segð þæt an nædre wære þe hæfde nigan heafdu, and simle gif mon anra hwilc of aslog þonne weoxon þær siofon of þam anum heafde. Ða gebyrede hit þæt ðær com se foremæra Erculus to, se was Iobes sunu. Ða ne mihte he geþencan hu he hi mid ænige cræfte ofercuman sceolde, ær he hi bewæg mid wuda utan and forbernde þa mid fyre.¹⁰⁶

104 H is found in London, BL, Cotton Domitian A.ix. The annals are printed by Plummer and Earle, *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, I.243–45.

105 See Stephen Baxter, "MS C of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the Politics of Eleventh-Century England," *English Historical Review* 122 (2007): 1189–1227.

106 Godden and Irvine, *Old English Boethius*, B 39.89–95: "So it is said in old stories that there was a serpent which had nine heads, and whenever one of them was cut off, then seven grew there from the one head. Then it happened that the famous Hercules, who was Jove's son, came there. He could not think how with any skill he could overcome it until he surrounded it with wood and burned it with fire."

Alfredian Apocrypha

*The Old English Dialogues and Bede*¹

David F. Johnson

Introduction

Sanctus Bedae was iboren her on Breotene mid us,
and he wisliche bec awende
þæt þeo Englise leoden þurh weren ilerde;
and he þeo cnotten unwreih, þe questiuns hoteþ,
þa derne dizelnesse þe deowurþe is.
[Saint Bede was born here in Britain with us,
and he wisely translated books
with which the English people were taught;
and he unravelled those knotty problems, known as doctrinal questions,
that secret mystery which is of great value.]²

These are the opening lines of the so-called *First Worcester Fragment*, a poem copied sometime in the first half of the thirteenth century by that famously anonymous scholar-scribe, the Tremulous Hand of Worcester. That the Tremulous scribe should choose to record a poem that laments the decline of learning and vernacular models in his day and celebrates a significant number of native Anglo-Saxon bishop-saints is completely consistent with other kinds of evidence we possess about his interests and motives. It is also particularly resonant for the subject of this chapter that the poem should begin by

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- 1 I would like to thank my friend and colleague Prof. Elaine Treharne for her comments on and assistance with this chapter at both the earliest and latest stages in its development, as well as Prof. Rolf H. Bremmer, Jr, for his comments on a later version. I am also very grateful to Prof. Sharon Rowley for sharing with me a pre-publication version of her book, *The Old English Version of Bede's Historia Ecclesiastica*. Needless to say, any remaining faults are mine alone.
 - 2 Text and translation of *The First Worcester Fragment* are from Elaine M. Treharne (ed.), *Old And Middle English c. 890–c. 1450: An Anthology*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: 2010), 364. The poem is found on f. 63r of Worcester Cathedral Library F. 174 and has been given titles such as *The Disuse of English* and *The Bede Fragment*, but the title *The First Worcester Fragment* has had the greatest staying power.

mentioning Bede, translation, and the education of the English people.³ Among the manuscripts upon which we know he left his distinctive mark are ones which contained the Old English translations of the two works under consideration here. I shall return to the Tremulous Scribe of Worcester and his interest in these two books toward the end of this chapter.

The Old English translations of Gregory's *Dialogues* and Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* (henceforth *OEGD* and *OEHE*) are texts that, ever since post-medieval readers first became aware of their existence, have spiralled further and further away from a central place in the canon of the books most "suitable for men to know" that King Alfred the Great was once thought to have translated himself. And, to some extent, this is as it should be. Only one scholar has ever seriously suggested that Alfred translated Gregory's *Dialogi*, and for some time now the scholarly consensus has prevailed that the famous king did not translate Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, either.⁴ Because the sources upon which these translations were based are so apparently dissimilar—the one a highly revered historiographical work, in some ways an exemplary and foundational text for the discipline; the other a more obviously religious text which, especially in the modern era, has been received with relatively little enthusiasm and even disowned as the product of Gregory the Great's mind and authorship—it may appear as if the only thing that the two Old English translations could have in common is their association, at whatever remove and however tenuous, with Alfred's program of vernacular translation. What I hope to demonstrate in what follows is that, while there are certainly differences between them, these two texts have more in common than one might at first suspect, and moreover these commonalities have the potential to tell us something about how they were received and used in Alfred's own era and beyond.

The Old English Texts and Translations

Any consideration of the place of these two Old English translations in the Alfredian canon must include an account of their manuscript transmission and survival. The following is a brief overview of what has come down to us today.

3 See Elaine Treharne, "Making their Presence Felt: Readers of Ælfric, c. 1050–1350," in *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. Hugh Magennis and Mary Swan (Leiden and Boston: 2009), 399–422, at 400–405.

4 John Earle, "Alfred as a Writer," in *Alfred the Great: Containing Chapters on his Life and Times*, ed. Alfred Bowker (London: 1899), 169–205, at 197–198.

*Manuscripts Containing the Old English Translation of Bede's
Historia Ecclesiastica*

There are seven extant manuscripts containing the *OEHE*, three of which are comprised of brief passages or fragments.

1. London, BL, Cotton Domitian A. ix (MS Zu), consists of a single leaf and is dated to the beginning of the tenth century.
2. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Tanner 10 (MS T), lacking a total of five quires; the date of the manuscript has been variously determined, the three most recent attempts producing a range of 890–930.⁵ There is no consensus on a place of origin, though Winchester was posited by Parkes, and evidence in the manuscript itself gives it a thirteenth century provenance of Thorney Abbey.⁶
3. London, BL, Cotton Otho B. xi (MS C), dated by Ker to the mid-tenth or first quarter of the eleventh century, with a place of origin at Winchester. Badly burned in the Cottonian fire of 1731, just under forty leaves survive, though one was removed prior to the fire and is preserved as London, BL, Additional 34,652.
4. Oxford, Corpus Christi College, 279B (MS O), dated by Ker to the early eleventh century, and lacking as many as four quires; nothing is known about this manuscript's place of origin or provenance, or even how or when it came to Oxford, Corpus Christi College.⁷
5. CCCC, 41 (MS B), dated to the first half of the eleventh century, possibly copied at Crediton, and among the books given to the cathedral library at Exeter by Bishop Leofric sometime before 1072. Toward the middle of the eleventh century a separate scribe added a great deal of marginal material, in both Latin and Old English, for which this manuscript is particularly well known.⁸
6. Cambridge, University Library, Kk.3.18 (MS Ca), is dated by Ker to the second half of the eleventh century, was written mostly by the scribe

5 See Sharon Rowley, *The Old English Version of Bede's Historia Ecclesiastica*, Anglo-Saxon Studies 16 (Cambridge: 2011), 16–17.

6 Rowley, *Old English Version*, 17, n. 10.

7 Rowley, *Old English Version*, 21–23, summarizes the theory, first put forth by Ker, that the grandson of Tudor Humanist John Twyne, Bryan Twyne, gave it to the college.

8 Rowley, *Old English Version*, 24, n. 31, provides a list of all the editions that have been produced of this marginal material. Among them are vernacular versions of the *Apocalypse of Thomas*, the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, the *Dialogues of Solomon and Saturn* in verse, and several homilies.

Hemming at Worcester Cathedral Priory, and bears traces of the activities of two other known scribes, Coleman (chancellor to Wulfstan in 1089), and the so-called Tremulous Hand of Worcester, who was active at the turn of the thirteenth century. It constitutes a close copy of MS O.⁹

In addition to the medieval manuscripts listed above, there is London, BL, Additional 43,703 (MS N), which consists of a full transcript of MS C made in the sixteenth century by Laurence Nowell at the home of Sir William Cecil. Miller, the most recent editor of the *OEHE*, was unaware of this transcript. Rowley cites further evidence to suggest that as many as three additional copies had existed in Durham, Cerne Abbey and Burton-on-Trent. Having surveyed the manuscript data in much greater detail than I provide above, Rowley concludes: "Considering all of these locations, it becomes clear that the *OEHE* was well disseminated in all parts of England during the medieval period."¹⁰

Manuscripts Containing the Old English Translation of Gregory's Dialogues

There are four known medieval manuscript witnesses to the *OEGD*:

1. Canterbury Cathedral Library, Additional 25 (MS A) is a fragment of a single bifolium comprising a few chapters from Book IV, dated by Ker to the end of the tenth century, and probably produced at Christ Church, Canterbury.¹¹

9 Rowley, *Old English Version*, 24–25 and 174–185; David F. Johnson and Winfried Rudolph, "More Notes by Coleman," *Medium Ævum* 79 (2010): 1–13.

10 Rowley, *Old English Version*, 25. Also provided in a footnote is a URL which takes the reader to a map of all reported medieval locations of the *OEHE*: <http://tinyurl.com/OEHMsLocations>.

11 David Yerkes's argument for a Canterbury origin rests on two pieces of evidence: (1) that it may have provided the Old English glosses found in Canterbury Cathedral Add. 32, a Latin copy of the *Dialogues* (see Yerkes, "The Text of the Canterbury Fragment of Werferth's Translation of Gregory's *Dialogues* and Its Relation to the Other Manuscripts," *ASE* 6 [1977]: 121–135, at 130 n.) and (2) that it is this manuscript referred to in a fourteenth-century catalogue of Christ Church Canterbury: *Dialogus beati Gregorii* among *Libri anglici* (see Yerkes, "The Translation of Gregory's *Dialogues* and Its Revision: Textual History, Provenance, Authorship," in *Studies in Earlier English Prose*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach [Albany: 1986], 335–343, at 336). See also Ker, *Catalogue*, xlv.

2. CCCC, 322 (MS C) contains a nearly complete text (one leaf is missing) and has most recently been dated to the second half of the eleventh century, its place of origin probably being Worcester.¹²
3. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 76 (MS H) contains a much revised version of Books I and II (lacking 21 leaves at the end), is dated to the first half of the eleventh century, but its place of origin is unknown. Its provenance of Worcester is confirmed by the presence of the eleventh-century marginal notes by Coleman and the thirteenth-century interventions by the Tremulous Hand.¹³
4. London, BL, Cotton Otho C. i, Volume 2 (MS O) consisting of two parts: the first, folios 1–61, (O1–2) contains Books I and II and is dated to the first half of the eleventh century; the second, comprising folios 62–137r and referred to as O3–4, contains most of Books III and IV, and was thought by Ker to have been written about forty years later than O1–2. The text ends abruptly at line 10 on f. 137, rendering Book IV incomplete. The place of origin for O1–2 is uncertain, though the use of alternating colored initials in that part of the manuscript has been likened to known practice in books made at Canterbury and Exeter.¹⁴ Ker notes features of the script of O3–4 that would indicate a Worcester origin, and Budny posits that this second part of O may have been made at Worcester.¹⁵ Of the four extant manuscripts containing the *OECD*, then, three have a Worcester provenance: O and C show indications of having been kept there in the twelfth century; O and H were glossed by the Tremulous Hand in the thirteenth.

12 See Mildred Budny, *Insular, Anglo-Saxon, and Early Anglo-Norman Manuscript Art at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge: an Illustrated Catalogue* (Kalamazoo: 1997), 625. Now see also Elaine Treharne's comments on the circularity of this attribution of CCCC 322 to Worcester, "Scribal Connections in Late Anglo-Saxon England," in *Texts and Traditions of Medieval Pastoral Care: Essays in Honour of Bella Millett*, ed. Cate Gunn and Catherine Innes-Parker (York: 2009), 29–49, at 35–37.

13 David Yerkes, "Gregory's *Dialogues* and Its Revision," and Christine Franzen, *The Tremulous Hand of Worcester: A Study of Old English in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford: 1991) place it at Worcester but base this attribution on an ambiguous reference in a late eleventh-century booklist probably from Worcester mentioning *.ii. englisc dialogues*. The only clear connection to Worcester dates to the thirteenth century, when the Tremulous Hand glossed parts of the manuscript. See now as well Johnson and Rudolph, "More Notes by Coleman."

14 Ker, *Catalogue*, 237; and Yerkes, "Gregory's *Dialogues* and Its Revision," 336.

15 Budny, *Illustrated Catalogue*, 625, is more specific: "at the command of Wulfstan II, Bishop of Worcester (1062–95), under whom Anglo-Saxon traditions and skills continued to flourish after the Norman Conquest."

Apart from the medieval manuscripts listed above, T. Oswald Cockayne made a full transcription of MS O which passed from him to W.W. Skeat, and would later be employed by H. Krebs in the 1870s.¹⁶ He would produce an edition, never published, of the text in MS H, which is now found in Taylorian Institute, Oxford, MS 8 E.15. The American scholar Henry Johnson made a full transcription of MS O in 1882, which now resides in Bowdoin College Library.¹⁷ At least two critics have discovered evidence for possible further translations of parts of Gregory's *Dialogi* into Old English, although in both cases the evidence does not point in the direction of a complete, independent translation.¹⁸ Many of the manuscripts listed above exhibit signs of use in the later Anglo-Saxon period and beyond, as well, evidence which demonstrates their continued importance and utility well beyond the Age of Alfred, when these translations were presumably made.¹⁹

On the face of it, the extant manuscript evidence would seem to indicate that the *OEHE* may have been more 'popular' than *OEGD* in Anglo-Saxon England, though just barely, and only if simple numbers of surviving manuscripts are taken as our measure. As Whitelock notes in brief and both Rowley and Molyneux demonstrate in considerably greater detail, with respect to the *OEHE*,

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- 16 See Yerkes, "The Full Text of the Metrical Preface to Wærferth's Translation of Gregory," *Speculum* 55 (1980): 505–513, at 507.
 - 17 Johnson's transcription resides in the collections of the Henry Johnson papers, George J. Mitchell Department of Special Collections & Archives, Bowdoin College Library, under the title *Transcript of the Cotton Manuscript of Wærferth's Old English Translation of Gregory's Dialogues*, call no. M194. C688. Krebs's transcript of the metrical preface is written in his own hand on the page proofs of an aborted edition of MS H of the *OEGD*.
 - 18 In 1981 Paul Szarmach raised the possibility that a non-Wærferthian Old English translation of the *Dialogues* might lie behind passages he detected in a homily by Wulfstan (Napier 1) and Vercelli 14, "Another Old English Translation of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*?" *ES* 62 (1981): 97–109, but more recently he has concluded that what appears in Vercelli 14 must be an adaptation of a Latin passage in the Homiliary of Paul the Deacon, "Vercelli Homily XIV and the Homiliary of Paul the Deacon," *LSE* 37 (2006): 75–87. For another independent translation of a portion of the *Dialogues*, see Brigitte Langefeld, "A Third Old English Translation of Part of Gregory's *Dialogues*, This Time Embedded in the Rule of Chrodegang," *ASE* 15 (1986): 197–204. Langefeld does not include Napier 1 and Vercelli 14 in her reckoning of Old English versions of the *Dialogues*, but rather counts the later adaptation contained in Hatton 76 as the second version, distinct from Wærferth's.
 - 19 For the most recent and thorough treatment of such user signs on the manuscripts of *OEHE*, see now Rowley, *Old English Version*, Chapters 8 and 9, 156–194. For details concerning the interventions of the Tremulous scribe in manuscripts of both *OEHE* and *OEGD*, see the studies by Franzen, Collier, and Johnson listed in note 94, below; for more on Coleman, see Johnson and Rudolf, "More Notes by Coleman."

“the scheme of transmisson implies lost manuscripts.”²⁰ That there must have been many lost manuscripts of the *OEGD* seems likely as well, for in contrast to the *OEHE*, no manuscript containing the *OEGD* is older than the first half of the eleventh century, or some 150 years removed from Wærferth’s original translation. While the surviving manuscript corpus for *OEGD* may be somewhat spare and the resultant text flawed (only MS C contains the work in a nearly complete form, but even that text poses problems of comprehension²¹), it seems clear from other kinds of evidence that the translation of Gregory’s work is likely to have been a fairly widely disseminated one throughout the Old English period. Ælfric himself knew of the translation, as is evident from a remark in his sermon on the efficacy of the Mass in his second series of homilies.²² That there was felt to be a need for a vernacular version of Gregory’s *Dialogues* in Anglo-Saxon England is further underscored by the fact that somewhere between fifty and a hundred and fifty years after Wærferth originally translated the *Dialogi*, a Reviser embarked on a thorough overhaul of Wærferth’s text in MS H.²³

Base Texts

The fact that both of the works under discussion in this chapter are translations naturally prompts the question of what they are translations of: in other

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- 20 Dorothy Whitelock, “The Prose of Alfred’s Reign,” in *Continuations and Beginnings: Studies in Old English Literature*, ed. E.G. Stanley (London: 1966), 89–93 at 88, n. 2; Rowley, *Old English Version*, 15–25; George Molyneaux, “The Old English Bede: English Ideology or Christian Instruction?” *EHR* 124 no. 511 (2009): 1289–1323, at 1292–1295.
 - 21 On the deficiencies of the Old English *Dialogues*, see especially Malcolm Godden, “Wærferth and King Alfred: The Fate of the Old English *Dialogues*,” in *Alfred the Wise: Studies in Honour of Janet Bately on the Occasion of her Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. Jane Roberts, Janet L. Nelson, and Malcolm Godden (Rochester, NY: 1997), 35–51.
 - 22 See Chapter 2.21, 177–180 in *Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies, The Second Series: Text*, ed. Malcom Godden, EETS ss 5 (London, 1979). Ælfric does not associate this translation with Alfred or give any indication that it is Wærferth’s translation he is referring to here, though Godden assumes that the translation is Wærferth’s; see “Ælfric and the Vernacular Prose Tradition,” *The Old English Homily and Its Backgrounds*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach and Bernard F. Huppé (Albany: 1978), 99–117, at 104. Ælfric’s knowledge of the *Dialogues* is further confirmed by his reference to Gregory’s account of “the holy Lawrence who lies in the city of Rome” in Ælfric’s *Passio Sancti Eadmundi Regis*. See *Ælfric’s Lives of the Saints*, ed. Walter W. Skeat, EETS os 115 (London: 1900), 332–333. I thank Prof. Rolf Bremmer, Jr for bringing this reference to my attention.
 - 23 For more on MS H, see Yerkes, “Gregory’s *Dialogues* and Its Revision.” An account of the post-medieval editorial history of both of our texts, however fascinating, would take up

words, which version or redaction of the Latin text did the translator(s) use to produce the Old English text? In the case of the *OEHE*, while we may not know who the translator or translators were, we have a great deal of knowledge concerning which branch of the Latin manuscript tradition they employed: Miller had determined that the *OEHE* was not based on the type found in the oldest manuscript of Bede's *HE* (the Moore manuscript, or M-type), but rather the text exemplified by MS Cotton Tiberius C.ii (C-type).²⁴ This was confirmed by Plummer in his edition of *HE*, and more recently Michael Lapidge has narrowed the identification even more significantly: he argues that it descends from a copy given to Abbot Albinus of Canterbury.²⁵

In the case of the *OEGD*, on the other hand, the situation seems less certain and more complicated. The stemma of the Old English manuscripts is spotty due to their small number and many differences.²⁶ Moreover, attempts

too much space here. For the most recent overview of editions of *OEHE*, see Rowley, *Old English Version*, 25–35. Sharon M. Rowley and Gregory Waite are preparing a new edition of *OEHE* that will include manuscript variants not available to Miller (Rowley, *Old English Version*, 28, n. 50). The history of editorial activity involving the *OEGD* appears at first sight to be brief and straightforward: after much wandering, it finally landed on the desk of Hans Hecht. For more on this editorial history, see David Yerkes, *The Two Versions of Wærferth's Translation of Gregory's Dialogues: an Old English Thesaurus* (Toronto: 1979), xxii, note 12; Yerkes, "A Neglected Transcript of the Cotton Manuscript of Wærferth's Old English Translation of Gregory's *Dialogues*," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 79 (1978): 21–22; and Yerkes, "The Text of the Canterbury Fragment," 121. Hecht's edition of the full text has thus been the only available one for over a hundred years: *Bischofs Wærferth von Worcester Übersetzung der Dialoge Gregors des Grossen*, ed. Hans Hecht, Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa V (Leipzig, 1900; rpt. Darmstadt, 1965). For a discussion of separate editions of the two prefaces to the *OEGD*, see Yerkes, "The Full Text," 505–513. See also Gregory Waite, *Old English Prose Translations of King Alfred's Reign*, Annotated Bibliographies of Old and Middle English Literature 6 (Rochester, NY: 2000), 355–356, for an overview and summary of their qualities. Rolf Bremmer and I are currently preparing a new edition of *OEGD*.

24 See Thomas Miller (ed. and trans.), *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, EETS OS 95, 96, 110, 111 (London: 1890–98), vol. 1, xxiii.

25 See C. Plummer, *Baedae opera historica*, 2 vols. (Oxford: 1896; reprinted as 1 vol., 1946), civ–cxxii for his description of the C-type manuscripts, and cxxviii–cxxix for his conclusions regarding the C-type as the basis for the *OEHE*: "Owing to the omission of the chronological summary, test 4 cannot be applied; but the four other tests show that he used a ms. of the C-type. And it was a good and pure ms. of that type." Michael Lapidge, "The Latin Exemplar of the Old English Bede," in ...*Un tuo serto di fiori in man recando: scritti in onore di Maria Amalia d' Aronco*, ed. Patrizia Lendinara, 2 vols. (Udine, 2008), vol. 2, 235–246, esp. 242–243; cited after Rowley, *Old English Version*, 2, n 10.

26 For the stemma constructed by Hecht, see *Übersetzung*, 35; and Yerkes's correction of it in light of the discovery of MS A, "The Text of the Canterbury Fragment," 133.

to compare what survives of Wærferth's Old English translation to modern editions of Gregory's original Latin is in many ways a questionable practice. Moricca and De Vogüé based their editions on Italian and French manuscripts, respectively, and both attempted to produce a text that came as close to Gregory's as possible, with understandably no thought for what the text might have looked like in a manuscript that Wærferth would use in the late ninth century. The contrast between what is known of the transmission history of the Latin *HE* and *Dialogi* could not be greater. In prefatory remarks to his discussion of his edition's editorial policy, De Vogüé emphasizes the contaminated state of the large corpus of extant manuscripts.²⁷ C.D. Jeffery underscores the perils in relying on the modern editions in his study of the underlying Latin sources of the *OEGD* and *Pastoral Care*. His comparison of a selection of passages from the *OEGD* demonstrates that they have more in common with the text produced by the Maurists (as printed by Migne), than they do with that found in either Moricca's or De Vogüé's editions. But he also found that we cannot rely on the Maurist version, either, for both he and Harting found passages that are closer to the text in Moricca than they are to Migne's.²⁸ This lack of an edition that reflects the state of the text that Wærferth may have used has compelled careful scholars like Christine Thijs to be creative when comparing the *OEGD* to the Latin. In her study of Wærferth's treatment of the miraculous in the *OEGD*, she developed a methodology that drew on all three of the most recent editions.²⁹ Thijs's study also brings to the fore the need for a new edition of the Old English text in which special attention is paid to the readings of MS O. While Pieter Harting corrected many of Hecht's O-based variants, he introduced new errors with some of his readings. Literally hundreds of transcriptional errors remain in Hecht's O-based variants, so any comparison of that text with the Latin using that edition must be conducted with caution.³⁰

27 Adalbert de Vogüé (ed.), *Grégoire le Grand: Dialogues*, Sources Chrétiennes 251, 260, 265 (Paris: 1978–80), vol. 1, 164. To understand just how complex the situation is, the reader need only consult the introduction to David Yerkes' study of the two versions of the *OEGD*: David Yerkes, *Two Versions*, xvi–xxvi.

28 See C.D. Jeffery, "The Latin Texts Underlying the Old English: *Gregory's Dialogues* and *Pastoral Care*," *Notes and Queries* 225 (1980): 483–488, at 485; Pieter N.U. Harting, "The Text of the Old English Translation of Gregory's *Dialogues*," *Neophilologus* 22 (1937): 281–302.

29 Christine Thijs, "Wærferth's Treatment of the Miraculous in his Old English Translation of Gregory's *Dialogi*," *Notes and Queries* n.s. 53 (2006): 272–286; she describes her methodology in detail at 274.

30 On the status of MS O, Harting's corrections to Hecht's readings, and the desirability of a new edition of MS O, see David Yerkes, "A New Collation of the Cambridge Manuscript of the Old English Translation of Gregory's *Dialogues*," *Mediaevalia* 3 (1979): 165–172, at 166.

Two further parallels between the pair of texts under consideration here are the dialect in which they were written and the nature of their translation style. Because he was Anglian,³¹ Wærferth's translation should naturally be expected to reflect his own dialect. Simeon Potter noted many years ago that the presence of Mercian characteristics in both *OEHE* and *OEGD* was for some an indication of Mercian authorship, whether at Alfred's court or some independent Mercian center.³² In his analysis of the Mercian vocabulary in *OEHE* and *OEGD*, Potter casts doubt on Miller's theory that the original manuscript must have been written at Lichfield, "the political and ecclesiastical capital of the Anglian Kingdom of Mercia."³³ But the theory that there was a Mercian archetype underlying the *OEHE* was taken to its extreme by R. Vleeskruyer, who posited an independent pre-Alfredian Mercian school of Old English prose.³⁴ In the case of the *OEGD* the identification of the dialect merely confirms what we already suspected, namely that, as Asser claims, the text was translated by someone with Mercian cultural roots: Wærferth, bishop of Worcester. In the case of the *OEHE* the issue is both more complex and potentially more significant for our understanding of that work's origins. Although it does not appear that there is a scholarly consensus concerning the meaning of the mixed dialectal forms found in the manuscripts containing *OEHE*,³⁵ that Bede's Latin work was originally translated by a Mercian seems clear from the evidence amassed by a long list of scholars who have taken up the question, from Miller to Potter to Klaeber to Whitelock and Rowley.

An even more hotly debated subject since the appearance of Miller's edition has been the nature of the connection, if there was any at all, between this translation and Alfred's program of translation and education. Whitelock was one of the first to posit in print that Alfred may have had nothing whatever to do with the production of the *OEHE*.³⁶ Rowley identifies a persistent trend in

31 See Simeon Potter, "On the Relation of the Old English Bede to Werferth's Gregory and to Alfred's Translations," *Vestník kralovské české společnosti nauk. Třída filosoficko-historicko-jazykozpytná*, 1930 (Prague: 1931), 1–76, at 28, n. 2.

32 Potter, *Relation*, 26–27.

33 Potter, *Relation*, 27.

34 R. Vleeskruyer, *The Life of St. Chad: An Old English Homily* (Amsterdam: 1953), esp. 38–62. See also Rowley, *Old English Version*, 41–42.

35 See Rowley, *Old English Version*, 43–46.

36 Dorothy Whitelock, "The Old English Bede," Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture, 1962, reprinted in *British Academy Papers on Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. E.G. Stanley (Oxford: 1990), 227–261, at 59. In a note (80, n. 16) she retracts her earlier assessment "that there can be no doubt that the translation of Bede was part of the king's scheme." This had been her conclusion in her Jarrow Lecture of 1960; see Dorothy Whitelock, "After Bede,"

much scholarship that implicitly associates the *OEHE* with Alfred's program despite the lack of definitive, empirical evidence:

Including the *OEHE* in the king's circle has been a matter of convention, or as Malcolm Godden puts it, the 'Alfred myth,' rather than documented historical fact. No incontrovertible evidence exists either way in relation to the *OEHE*. The paleographical window, initiated by a series of excerpts dating to c. 883–930, allows the possibility of composition before, during, and after Alfred's reign.³⁷

But even if the current state of scholarship makes it impossible for us to determine whether these two texts were translated at the same center or within the same literary circle or "school," whether it be within or outside of Alfred's orbit of influence, they do share features that have led them to be grouped together by scholars in the past. In both texts these features sometimes result in a translation that has been labelled 'slavish' by some, though Potter prefers the phrase "little more than a gloss, 'word be word'."³⁸ In Potter's view, both contain scattered examples of a "phrase by phrase" translation, but in neither do we encounter what he terms "the Alfredian type of translation," or "*andgit of andgite*." There are none of the free renderings of the kind attributed to Alfred in the texts still considered to have been authored by him and for which he has been so universally admired. This close translation of the Latin by Wærferth and the anonymous translator of the *OEHE* has met with widespread scorn over the years. In 1943, Sir Frank Stenton refers to the *OEHE* as "simply a close rendering of the Latin text, [containing] little, if any, extraneous matter of the kind which in other works illustrates the character of Alfred's thought."³⁹ Whitelock calls the ubiquitous use of tautology, or word-pairs, by the translators, "monotonous" and asserts that both have "clumsy, over-literal passages," though the translator of the *OEHE* can produce "vigorous, idiomatic English" when he sets his mind to it.⁴⁰ Jeffery cites Harting's statement that Wærferth's translation "is so faithful as to become at times equivalent to a gloss," and Whitelock's remark that "The two Mercian works, *Gregory's Dialogues* and the *Bede*, are often over-literal in their renderings," as support for his own

Jarrow Lecture 1960, repr. in *Bede and His World: The Jarrow Lectures 1958–1993*, ed. Michael Lapidge, 2 vols. (Aldershot: 1994), vol. 1, 35–50, at 45.

37 Rowley, *Old English Version*, 45. For a thorough overview of the questions of authorship and relations to Alfred's program of translation, see Rowley, *Old English Version*, 36–46.

38 Potter, *Relation*, 2.

39 Sir Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: 1971), 273.

40 Whitelock, "The Prose of Alfred's Reign," 78.

conclusion that the *Dialogues* were “irksome reading, whether in Latin or Old English.”⁴¹ Most recently Malcolm Godden has assessed the translation as a “very literal rendering,” one in which ultimately “nothing of substance is added and very little removed.”⁴²

Such opinions notwithstanding, it is possible to view these close, nearly literal translations in a different, more positive light. P. Fijn van Draat, for example, attempts to elevate the *OEHE* translators’ use of tautology (one source of the monotony Whitelock and Jeffery discovered in these texts) to the level of stylistic ornamentation.⁴³ In his 1985 University of Toronto dissertation on the vocabulary of the *OEHE*, Gregory Waite provides an important counter-weight to the kinds of disparaging views associated with close translations, in particular the *OEHE*. There he cautions that “it is misleading to play up the problems of the translation, and to ignore those passages where control and rhetorical manipulation are in evidence.”⁴⁴ Janet Bately also comments that both translations “normally respect and preserve the distinctive nature of Old English prose syntax,” a practice which in her view results frequently in “highly effective prose.”⁴⁵

41 Jeffery, “The Latin Texts,” at 484 and 487.

42 Godden, “Wærferth and King Alfred,” 47. The tenor and conclusions of this study suggest that Godden might well agree with Jeffery’s views on Wærferth’s accomplishment, “The Latin Texts.”

43 P. Fijn van Draat, “The Authorship of the Old English *Bede*: A Study in Rhythm,” *Anglia* 39 (1916): 319–334. See especially 321–322 for a description of the phenomenon in Old and Middle English and other European vernaculars, and for a range of possible motivations behind its use. Unfortunately for Van Draat’s thesis and that of others who have seen tautology as a rhetorical ornament, Sherman Kuhn demonstrated in 1972 that the translated *cursus* detected by Van Draat is no more than part of natural language, occurring as it does in Old English charter boundaries: “Cursus in Old English: Rhetorical Ornament or Linguistic Phenomenon?” *Speculum* 47 (1972): 188–206.

44 Gregory Waite, “The Vocabulary of the Old English Version of Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica*,” Diss. Univ. of Toronto, 1985, 17; cited after Rowley, *The Old English Version*, 6. See also Waite’s conclusion on 132, that “the technique of translation is to a large degree deliberate, and that the literal style and artificial vocabulary are...purposefully juxtaposed with certain native English rhetorical features, such as the use of alliteration, amplification through doublings, and creative compounding. It is perhaps a curious mix, but one created by design, nevertheless.” The same might be said, *mutatis mutandis*, of Wærferth’s *OEGD*. See also Paul Szarmach’s study, “‘The Poetic Turn of Mind’ of the Translator of the OE *Bede*,” in *Anglo-Saxons: Studies Presented to Cyril Roy Hart*, ed. Simon Keynes and Alfred P. Smyth (Dublin: 2006), 54–68.

45 Janet M. Bately, *The Literary Prose of King Alfred’s Reign: Translation or Transformation*, Inaugural Lecture, King’s College, University of London, 1980; repr. in *Old English Prose, Basic Readings*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (New York: 2000), 3–27, at 13.

Moreover, Bately notes the importance of *what* was being translated in her discussion of the texts translated by Alfred. “Close and accurate translation of a difficult text will simply transfer the problem from Latin into English. If the thought is hard to grasp in Latin, it will stay hard in English.”⁴⁶ But conversely, if the thought is not difficult nor the Latin obscure, a close and accurate translation may be seen to be quite effective.⁴⁷

Finally, one of the most persuasive treatments of Wærferth’s *OEGD* as a literal translation within the wider landscape of medieval vernacular translation is by Christine Thijs. She argues for a desire on the part of these translators to respect the *auctoritas* of the famous authors of their anterior sources. Far from being uninspired, unimaginative and incompetent, they, like others throughout the Middle Ages,

may have gladly stooped to accept the role of a ‘slave’, prepared, figuratively, to follow Christ and, by washing the feet of the authoritative author of their source text and by serving their patrons and readers, making their understanding of the text easier through the use of the vernacular, yet in all other respects preserving the original text.⁴⁸

The ideology of translation adopted by Wærferth—and by the translators of the *OEHE*—was one of humility and self-effacement. It seems especially clear in the case of Wærferth that his intent was to produce a translation that came as close as possible to the original without doing too much damage to the syntax and idiom of his target language, i.e. Old English.⁴⁹ This is where the notion of a ‘service’ translation comes into play, Thijs explains. “The main aim of the latter is to make the source text more accessible to readers who would have some (or much) difficulty with the original language.”⁵⁰ Nor may it be said that all translators shared the classical and modern aversion to the “*fides interpretes*,” as Thijs provides a fairly comprehensive list of early Christian and medieval

46 Bately, “Literary Prose of King Alfred’s Reign,” 13.

47 Similarly, Potter remarks that “Thanks to the easy and unaffected language of both Bede and Gregory, it was possible to render the longest sentences literally and even to retain the original sentence structure,” Potter, *Relation*, 4.

48 Christine Thijs, “Close and Clumsy or Fanatically Faithful: Medieval Translators on Literal Translation,” in *Transmission and Transformation in the Middle Ages: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Kathleen Cawsey and Jason Harris (Dublin: 2007), 15–39, at 16–17. Thijs cites a number of further modern pejorative attitudes toward literal translation of a variety of texts from several European vernaculars.

49 That the extant manuscript versions suggest he did not entirely succeed in this endeavor is a point made by Godden in his “Wærferth and King Alfred.”

50 Thijs, “Close and Clumsy,” 19.

translators who made no bones about intentionally hewing very closely to their sources, from Jerome, Gregory the Great and Boethius to John Trevisa and William Caxton.⁵¹ Faithful, sense-for-sense translations can actually contribute much to the target language over time, “increasing its vocabulary by introducing loanwords, loan translations, and borrowed imagery and expressions, and improving its syntax by enhancing its flexibility and enlarging the range of constructions used.”⁵² To my knowledge, Thijs is the first to suggest that the striking incorporation of the Latinate Dative Absolute construction in these two translations actually constitutes an enrichment of the language. As she notes, its prevalence is one of the aspects responsible for the label of slavish, but its introduction here may well have been responsible for its adoption by later Anglo-Saxon writers, including Ælfric.⁵³ However that may be, Thijs’s study provides a welcome counterbalance to contemporary critics who would dismiss translations like these as the inferior products of uncreative minds.⁵⁴

The existence of so many manuscripts containing these two texts, quite apart from the likelihood that there were many more which no longer survive, suggests that they were held in very high regard by those who had them copied. That Wærferth’s *OEGD* was furthermore used as the basis for the revision contained in MS. H, instead of an entirely new translation being produced from the available Latin, is, as Thijs suggests, not an indication of dissatisfaction with Wærferth’s translation, but rather of respect and appreciation for his work.⁵⁵ Finally, are we to assume that Asser is exaggerating or somehow entirely ignorant of the actual translation when he praises Wærferth’s learning and skill in no uncertain terms, concluding that he acquitted himself of the task by translating “intelligently and in a very polished style”?⁵⁶

51 See Thijs, “Close and Clumsy,” 22–25 for text and translations of these authors’ positions on literal translation.

52 Thijs, “Close and Clumsy,” 29.

53 Thijs, “Close and Clumsy,” 29; for more on the dative absolute in *OEGD* and *OEHE*, see especially Potter, *Relation*, 21–23. He notes there that “The Dative Absolute was introduced by Old English translators from the Latin: it died with Wyclif” (22).

54 Toward the end of her study Thijs comments on the contrast between a modern age that supports a “cult of innovation” but underestimates and underappreciates “the linguistic skills and ideological values that underlie the faithful, in the sense of close and accurate, translations” (39).

55 Thijs, “Close and Clumsy,” 33.

56 For the relevant passage where Asser praises Wærferth’s skill as a translator, see William Henry Stevenson (ed. and trans.), *Asser’s Life Of King Alfred: Together With The Annals Of Saint Neots Erroneously Ascribed To Asser* (Oxford: 1959), 77; and K&L 92, for a translation. Because he was not a native speaker of English, one might well take Asser’s words here

There may certainly be problems with the text of especially the *OECD* as it is currently preserved, but I think it preferable, with Waite, to resist “playing up the problems with the translation,” and to focus instead on the far more numerous instances in which both of these translators successfully achieved the kind of respectful and accurate service translation they seem to have been intent upon producing. The final word on this matter must be that of David Yerkes, whom Malcom Godden describes as the “heroic exception” to the general critical marginalization of Wærferth’s work, and “whose two books and numerous articles on the Old English *Dialogues* have kept Wærferth visible almost single-handedly in the last two decades.”⁵⁷ Yerkes’ assessment of the quality of Wærferth’s accomplishment parallels that of Asser:

The original translation was excellent. The Reviser corrected—as opposed to simply altering or variegating—Wærferth’s text only rarely, and in nearly every such instance our copies of the original translation may be corrupt or Wærferth may have had a corrupt Latin reading before him.⁵⁸

Apocryphal Alfrediana

This chapter appears in the sub-section of this volume entitled ‘Alfrediana’, which, as I read it, means something like ‘works associated in some way with Alfred’. Like the *Orosius* and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the *OEHE* and *OECD* fall outside the Alfredian corpus. But the title of this chapter makes a further distinction: these two texts are “Apocrypha.” What does this mean? Why are they considered such? The most straightforward answer to this question has of course to do with authorship: neither of these works is now believed to have been translated by Alfred himself. But there may be an ideological reason as well, one related to their perceived lack of quality and the absence of much by way of “Alfredian” sense-for-sense translation touched upon above. Whereas the *OECD* adds very little to its original, and the *OEHE* follows suit to some

with a grain of salt. Moreover, many modern readers may wonder especially at Asser’s assessment of Wærferth’s style as “very polished” (*elegantissime*). And yet, in the light of Thijs’s cogent argument about a perceived preference for close and accurate translations of especially this kind of text, I am inclined to think that for Asser “intelligent and polished” meant literal and accurate, rather than close and clumsy. But to accept this view one must assume that Asser was indeed capable of reading Old English.

57 Godden, “Wærferth and King Alfred,” 35, n.2.

58 Yerkes, *Syntax and Style*, 82.

degree, both of these texts offer very little of what Janet Bately has called “independent writing” of the kind that would reveal the mind of the great king. We find a great deal of this sort of writing in the Old English *Boethius* and *Soliloquies*, but hardly any in the two translations under consideration here.⁵⁹ Not only has Alfred been excluded as their author, but any knowledge of or involvement by him in their production, at any remove, has recently been called into question. This is why they may fairly be considered apocryphal, though in both cases an argument could be made for inclusion, if not in the corpus, then at least in Alfred’s original scheme. Let me now consider briefly why each text was translated, and for whom, within the context of their status as “apocryphal Alfrediana.”

The association of the *OEHE* with Alfred and his program of translation rests upon a fairly thin foundation: Ælfric of Eynsham’s attribution of the text to Alfred in his homily on Gregory the Great.⁶⁰ The first challenge to Alfredian authorship came in 1876 when Henry Sweet observed that the word order in the section he printed from the *OEHE* in his *Reader* was “un-English” and could not be by Alfred.⁶¹ Following the publication of Miller’s edition, in which he advanced his theory that the translation was not Alfred’s on dialectal grounds, the number of scholars undermining the assumption of Alfred’s authorship based on stylistic and linguistic arguments grew. Not all of these scholars were willing to allow the *OEHE* to leave Alfred’s sphere of influence completely, however. Deutschbein sought to explain away the Mercian elements by positing two separate translations, one of which was Alfred’s, while Klaeber would brook no doubt concerning Alfred’s involvement in the translation, despite the lack of any empirical evidence linking him to the work.⁶² The idea that Alfred somehow had a hand in the translation of the *OEHE*, either individually or as part of a team, persisted well into the twentieth century, and its cultural capital is still current in one form or another today.

59 Bately, “Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything? The Integrity of the Alfredian Canon Revisited,” *Medium Ævum* 78.2 (2009): 189–215, at 209. See especially Whitelock, “The Old English Bede,” 77 and n. 169, for examples of this kind of thing that occur in the *Boethius* and the *Soliloquies* but are absent from both the *OEGD* and the *OEHE*. See also Malcolm Godden, “Did King Alfred Write Anything?” *Medium Ævum* 76 (2007): 1–23.

60 Rowley, *Old English Version*, 37.

61 Rowley, *Old English Version*, 38.

62 See Max Deutschbein, “Dialektisches in der ags. Uebersetzung von Bedas Kirchengeschichte,” *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 26 (1901): 169–244; Frederick Klaeber, “Notes on the Alfredian Version of Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*,” *PMLA* 14, Appendix I and II Proceedings (1899), lxxii–lxxiii, at lxxiii (cited after Rowley, *Old English Version*, 38).

The association with Alfred frequently goes hand in hand with theories about why the work—in whole or part—was included in the program. J.W. Pearce thought Alfred had it included because it would have been inconceivable to him had he “neglected the history of his own country.”⁶³ Hans Hecht, discussing the relationship between *OEHE* and *OEGD* in his edition of the latter, speculated that it may have been one of the *libris Saxonis* mentioned by Asser that were “carefully read” in Alfred’s palace school, and that it could have been the work of an “unbekannten Magisters mercischer Herkunft.”⁶⁴ His explanation for the fact that almost a third of the original *HE* is excised from the translation is that this material was unsuitable for the pupils at this school, and furthermore that “an improved version was made at the king’s request.”⁶⁵ But he offers no proof for this theory, because there is none, and it remains speculation. Dorothy Whitelock surveyed all of the evidence, of course, for an attribution of the translation to Alfred in her Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture of 1962. She offers no theory of her own as to *why* it was translated, though she does comment on the stark contrast in how the unknown translator treated his sources. She speculates that no such far-reaching cuts were applied to the *Regula pastoralis* and *Dialogi* possibly out of reverence for their author, the ‘Apostle of the English.’⁶⁶ Quite apart from the suggestion that Bede would not have enjoyed a level of respect at least approaching that of Gregory (and how does one gauge such things, anyway?), Whitelock is willing here to accord Gregory’s texts a sufficient degree of respect to prevent them from being redacted, but not enough to allow for a “respectfully” close translation of the kind that Wærferth and others were trained to produce (and Alfred, too, it would seem, for he made the Old English *Regula pastoralis* [*OECF*], itself a translation that in places is just as “overly-literal”). However that may be, Whitelock concludes that (a) Alfred was not the work’s author, and (b) that there is no positive evidence for it having been included in Alfred’s program of translation. Having dismissed all of the theories advanced up to then, the way was cleared for the *OEHE*’s relegation to the realm of Alfredian apocrypha: the work was not translated by Alfred, and there is no evidence that he had it commissioned.

And yet the idea that the *OEHE* must somehow be associated with Alfred has been a persistent one, even in the face of sensible warnings such as Janet

63 An idea that Dorothy Whitelock dismisses; see J.W. Pearce, “Did King Alfred Translate the *Historia Ecclesiastica*?” *PMLA* 8 (1892): vii, col. 105; cited after Whitelock, “Old English Bede,” n. 27.

64 “An unknown master of Mercian descent,” Hecht, *Übersetzung*, 23.

65 Cited after Whitelock, “Old English Bede,” 59.

66 Whitelock, “Old English Bede,” 61.

Bately's that "the fact that Bede's *HE* is a text whose translation might well have been desired by Alfred is not proof that the surviving translation was made at the king's request."⁶⁷ A great deal more has been written on this topic, and it remains a part of the Alfredian narrative that continues to excite the imagination. The most up-to-date survey of the authorship question in regards to the *OEHE* is found in Sharon Rowley's recent monograph,⁶⁸ but for our purposes an important question remains: if we do not know who translated the work, or even whether it was conceived of and executed in the context of Alfred's program of translation, how can we possibly say with any degree of certainty who it was translated *for*? The short answer to these questions is that we cannot: any characterization of this translation as a text for use in the classroom to teach either English or Latin, or as a text for Alfred's own use, or even as a work to be distributed to and read by Alfred's bishops, as the *OEGD* and *OECP* were, must remain speculation in the absence of further evidence.

King Alfred's own involvement in the production of the *OEGD* has never been much of an issue, as from the earliest days of modern scholarship on the text it was known that Bishop Wærferth translated Gregory's work at the behest of King Alfred. The basis for this is Asser's *Latin Life*, as is made clear in the passage from that biography cited above. William of Malmesbury, who in the twelfth century provided us with the earliest list of translations attributed to Alfred, makes it clear that the *Dialogi* were translated by Wærferth, as did John Trevisa in the fourteenth century (who presumably based this attribution on William of Malmesbury).⁶⁹ Linguistic arguments have thus not been necessary to discount Alfred's authorship of the *OEGD*, although Malcolm Godden does construct just such an argument to disprove Alfred's authorship of the one remaining bit of that text to which we might attach the king's name, i.e. the preface in CCC 322, which is cast in the king's voice and thus implicitly attributes its authorship to Alfred himself.⁷⁰

67 Bately, "Old English Prose," 104.

68 See especially Chapter 2, "Backgrounds, Contexts and The History of Scholarship," 56–67.

69 See Whitelock, "Prose of Alfred's Reign," 69; for Trevisa, see Ronald Waldron, "Trevisa's Original Prefaces on Translation: A Critical Edition," in *Medieval English Studies Presented to George Kane*, ed. Edward Donald Kennedy, Ronald Waldron, and Joseph S. Wittig (Woodbridge: 1988), 285–299, at 292: "Also Kyng Alured, þæt foundede þe vnyuersite of Oxenford, translatede þe beste lawes into Englysch tonge and a gret del of þe Sauter out of <Latyn> into Englysch, and made Wyrefryth, bishop of Wyrceetre, translate Seint Gregore hys bokes Dialoges out of Latyn ynto Saxon."

70 See Godden, "Wærferth and King Alfred." For text and translation see Whitelock, "The Prose of Alfred's Reign," 1.

As we have seen, a significant portion of the scholarship that compares the *OEGD*—this preface included—to works genuinely thought to have been authored by Alfred has not been to the good Bishop's advantage. Both Godden and Whitelock are to some extent concerned with the question of whether the text was designed for private use by Alfred alone; Whitelock concludes that the preface cited above is an indication that the king did indeed want the *OEGD* for his own private use, as opposed to his program designed "to increase the standard of learning in his kingdom."⁷¹ But Godden demonstrates convincingly, in part based on stylistic grounds, that this preface must have been written by Wærferth himself. He goes so far as to conclude that "it seems increasingly unlikely that Alfred read the Old English version at all closely, or thought very highly of it."⁷² In the essay cited previously, Godden provides a detailed survey of the checkered survival of Wærferth's original translation, describing in no uncertain terms Wærferth's diminishing association with the translation and the several attempts to correct or supplant his original work. As I suggest above, however, the same evidence can and has been viewed by others in a more positive light.

In his *HE*, Bede provides us with a comprehensive list of the books written by Gregory and well known in Anglo-Saxon England in his day. Why, out of all the writings of Gregory's presumably available to him, would King Alfred or his advisers choose to commission his *Dialogues* as one of the books 'most fit for men to know'? If we consider Alfred's situation (centers of education destroyed, dearth of Latin-literate priests and teachers, the need for literate and competent administrators on the one hand, and a revitalized clergy on the other), and take into account the ostensible purpose of his program of translation (his description of a two-tiered course of education—vernacular literacy first, accomplished in part by the books that all men should know, followed by a Latin education for those who would enter the clergy), we encounter three possibilities, each of them equally plausible and none of them mutually exclusive: (1) He wanted a didactic tool, much like the *Pastoral Care*, that could be used in the education of the secular clergy whose Latin was not yet good enough to read it in the original; (2) he intended it to be used by those same priests in their ministry to their lay flocks; and (3) he felt it would be useful in the education of his free-born secular subjects who would hold positions of leadership at various levels. It seems unlikely that Alfred would have made any great distinction between the clergy and the laity when it came to inculcating Christian morals, beliefs and values.⁷³

⁷¹ Whitelock, "The Prose of Alfred's Reign," 68.

⁷² Godden, "Wærferth and King Alfred," 37.

⁷³ The best treatment of the first possibility is by Kees Dekker, "King Alfred's Translation of Gregory's *Dialogi*," especially 46–50. This is not to deny that the translations would also

Gregory's leading role in bringing Christianity to the island is recognized in the verse preface appearing in the Old English *Pastoral Care* that follows Alfred's own, famous prose one.⁷⁴ Alfred chose to translate the *Pastoral Care* for fairly obvious practical reasons, but no doubt as well because of the high regard in which Gregory was held, including the resounding testimonies of Bede in his *Historia Ecclesiastica* and elsewhere.⁷⁵ Knowing this, how could Gregory's *Dialogi* not have been on Alfred's list of books that 'all men should know'?⁷⁶ If we start from the premise that *all* of Gregory's known works (see Bede) were initially candidates for translation, we may be able to reconstruct, however speculatively, the reasons why these (*Dialogues*, *Pastoral Care*) were chosen and the others Bede lists (*Homilies on the Gospel* and *Ezekiel*, *Moralia in Iob*, letters, etc.) were not. If, with Smyth, we assume that Alfred probably got his inspiration for having Gregory's *Dialogi* translated from Bede, then it seems worthwhile to take another close look at what Bede says about Gregory's writings there.⁷⁷ In the course of the first book of Chapter 2 in *HE*, which is devoted in its entirety to recounting the life of Gregory the Great, Bede tells us that he was encouraged to write by the brothers in his monastery:

Nam hortati sunt eum ut librum beati Iob magnis inuolutum obscuritatibus mystica interpretatione discuteret...⁷⁸

And:

have been used by members of the clergy whose Latin was not proficient; he says as much in the last paragraph of the verse preface to the *Pastoral Care*. Note as well that Dekker argues for their translation as a training tool for non Latin-literate clergy.

74 See Carolin Schreiber, *King Alfred's Old English Translation of Pope Gregory the Great's Regula Pastoralis and its Cultural Context* (Frankfurt am Main: 2003), 197–199.

75 Paul Meyvaert, "Bede and Gregory the Great," in *Bede and His World*, vol. 2, 103–132.

76 Of course, there is the very real possibility that Wærferth had already translated the *Dialogi*, or that it was his idea to include it in the King's translation program. Whether the decision was his alone, or the king's, or the result of a committee decision on the part of the king and his learned advisers, it seems likely that a group of Englishmen concerned with the pastoral care of the members of their realm would not have overlooked such an obvious choice as Gregory's *Dialogi*, especially given their (the king's) selection of Gregory's other important work for that purpose, the *Cura Pastoralis*.

77 Alfred P. Smyth, *King Alfred the Great* (Oxford: 1995), 572.

78 "They urged him to unfold by spiritual interpretation the book of Job, a work which is shrouded in great obscurity," Bertram Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors (eds. and trans.), *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford: 1992), at 126–127.

Alium quoque librum conposuit egregium, qui uocatur Pastoralis, in quo manifesta luce patefecit, quales ad ecclesiae regimen adsumi, qualiter ipsi rectores uiuere, qua discretione singulas quasque audientium instruere personas, et quanta consideratione propriam cotidie debeant fragilitatem pensare.⁷⁹

Bede merely mentions Gregory's *Homilies on the Gospel*, but his assessment of the *Dialogues* is much more expansive:

Sed et Omelias euangelii numero XL composuit, quas in duobus codicibus aequa sorte distinxit. Libros etiam Dialogorum IIII fecit, in quibus rogatu Petri diaconi sui uirtutes sanctorum, quos in Italia clariores nosse uel audire poterat ad exemplum uiuendi posteris collegit ut, sicut in libris expositionum suarum quibus sit uirtutibus insudandum edocuit, ita etiam descriptis sanctorum miraculis quae uirtutum earundem sit claritas ostenderet.⁸⁰

We can contrast this with Bede's description of Gregory's *Homilies on Ezekiel*, which follows immediately afterward:

Primam quoque et ultimam Ezechielis prophetae partem, quae uidebantur obscuriores, per Omelias XX et duas, quantum lucis intus habeant, demonstraui.⁸¹

Of all the texts authored by Gregory and mentioned by Bede in this chapter, the ones that suggest themselves as being useful for the audience Alfred names

79 "He composed another remarkable book called the *Pastoral Care*, in which he set forth in the clearest manner what sort of persons should be chosen to rule the Church and how these rulers ought to live; with how much discrimination they should instruct different types of listeners and how earnestly they ought each day to reflect on their own frailty," Colgrave and Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, 126–127.

80 "He composed forty *Homilies on the Gospel*, which he divided into two volumes of equal size, and made four books of *Dialogues* in which, at the request of Peter his deacon, he collected the virtues of the most famous saints he knew or could learn of in Italy, as an example of life to posterity: as in his expository works he taught what virtues men ought to strive after, so, by describing the miracles of the saints, he showed how glorious those virtues are," Colgrave and Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, 128–129.

81 "He also showed in twenty-two homilies how much inner light is to be found within the most obscure sections of the prophet, Ezekiel, namely the first part and the last" Colgrave and Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, 128–129.

first in his Preface are precisely his *Pastoral Care* and *Dialogues*. These are the books from Gregory's *oeuvre* that could be considered best for 'all men to know', i.e. useful to the secular clergy in terms of the information they provide about their duties etc., useful again to that same clergy for the material contained therein (especially the *Dialogues*) from which they could draw in their preaching to a lay audience, and equally valuable as didactic tools for promoting both vernacular literacy and Christian values amongst the secular subjects mentioned by Alfred in his preface to the *Pastoral Care*. Discussions of the audience of *OEGD* and the Old English *Pastoral Care* tend to forget these free-born sons of Alfred's counselors and advisors who would go on to assume secular roles of responsibility and leadership, and whom Alfred clearly wanted to have a firm grounding in Christian morality and values. By contrast, the *Homilies on Ezekiel*, *Homilies on the Gospel* and *Moralia in Iob*, given their relative obscurity and somewhat more specialized religious applications, might be better suited to those "whom one wishes to teach further and wishes to advance to holy orders."⁸² In his study of the *OEGD*, Kees Dekker argues that Bede made "no qualitative distinction between the *Dialogi* and the rest of Gregory's works," and that King Alfred "regarded the *Dialogi* on a par with, and complementary to the rest of Gregory's corpus."⁸³ My reading of Bede's descriptions presented above suggests to me that Alfred may well have made a qualitative distinction between the works of Gregory that he found there, just not the one some critics have assumed. Partly because of the authority that they carried—they were, after all, the works of the apostle of England—but mostly because of their didactic value for the audience described above, Alfred and his advisors may have considered the *Pastoral Care* and *Dialogues* to be in fact *superior* to the others and better suited to their purpose.

Dekker reminds us of how until recently the *Dialogi* were regarded as 'an aberration of an otherwise noble mind', and how even the editor of what for a long time was the standard edition, Umberto Moricca, objected to 'its superstition, credulity and historical inaccuracy'.⁸⁴ This attitude seems to have spilled over into the realm of the Old English *Dialogues*, as well. William D. McCready's study of the *Dialogi* provides the single most significant corrective to this view.⁸⁵ For Gregory, these miracles functioned as examples of virtuous living and were meant to inspire the reader to strive for the same level of virtue.⁸⁶ Gregory's

82 K&L, 126.

83 Dekker, "King Alfred's Translation," 35.

84 Dekker, "King Alfred's Translation," 31 and note 26.

85 William D. McCready, *Signs of Sanctity in the Thought of Gregory the Great* (Toronto: 1989).

86 Dekker, "King Alfred's Translation," 32.

attitude towards the miracles sprang forth from his 'inclination to view the world allegorically'.⁸⁷ What indications are there that the Anglo-Saxons did not understand Gregory's purpose? Why should we suppose that the *OECD* were not read profitably by Alfred and later generations of Anglo-Saxons? A partial answer to these questions, and one noted by others, is that Gregory's text itself provides clues as to how he intended the *Dialogi* to be read.⁸⁸ Moreover, Wærferth and Alfred, like Bede before them, recognized the value of the *Dialogues* as a repository of narratives exemplifying virtuous, Christian living, rather than simple tales for unsophisticated readers. Dekker arrives at this conclusion in part by examining Wærferth's additions to the original. These additions take the form of a prose preface appearing in manuscripts C and H, as well as introductory and concluding comments at the beginning of each of the four books of *OECD* and at the end of Books I–III. It is especially these latter additions that, presumably because they are not on a par with those that Alfred inserted in his own translations of the *Boethius* and the *Pastoral Care*, have not attracted much commentary by critics.⁸⁹ And yet these additions illustrate the high regard in which Gregory is held by Wærferth (and Alfred), as well as the purpose of the *OECD*: it constitutes a text that may be used to instruct those who wish to live a virtuous life.⁹⁰ That description encompasses, of course, a broad swath of Anglo-Saxon society, from the ruling nobility to Christians of the humblest social station. Malcolm Godden has recently argued that the only solid evidence we have for the target audience of the *OECD* points in the direction of Alfred's own bishops, many of whom would have benefited from translations of these two texts as aids to their own understanding and in their pastoral work. If this is indeed the case, then the initial audience profiting directly from the availability of the *OECD* and *OECP* in English would have been the bishops, but a much wider audience—those for whom the bishops applied what they found in these works in their pastoral duties—is surely to have benefited just as much from their availability, however indirectly.⁹¹

87 McCready, *Signs of Sanctity*, 5, quoted after Dekker, "King Alfred's Translation," 32.

88 See text and translation of *Dialogi* Prol. 7–9, cited by Dekker, "King Alfred's Translation," 32. McCready cites the same passage in *Signs of Sanctity*, 87.

89 For a trenchant analysis of these passages, see especially Dekker, "King Alfred's Translation," 36–43.

90 For an argument that this audience consisted mainly of bishops whose Latin was suspect, see Malcolm Godden, "The Alfredian Project and its Aftermath: Rethinking the Literary History of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries," Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture, The British Academy, London, January 2009.

91 See Godden, "The Alfredian Project," 100, where he (rightly) observes that "who the intended readers were is left tantalisingly unclear and there have been several different

Malcolm Godden concludes his recent study of what he calls “the Alfredian Project” by asking the following question:

If we were to drop the Alfredian project in its larger form from our cultural narrative of the Anglo-Saxons, along with the burnt cakes and the foundation of Oxford University, what would we put in its place?

In the course of his discussion of the works attributed to Alfred and his circle, with a particular focus on the *Boethius* and *Soliloquies*, Godden constructs a careful and suasive argument for the possibility that the “Alfredian project” might not have been as novel as we have always thought, and that it might well have been much more limited than later, albeit medieval, testimonies (Ælfric and William of Malmesbury) made it out to be. In fact, if one follows him in accepting only the truly reliable evidence for Alfred’s authorship of any text or sponsorship of such a project, then in fact the only two works discussed in this volume that may be said *not* to be apocryphal are the *OEGD* and *OECF*.⁹² Godden’s argument is an intriguing one, and it complicates matters for the *OEGD*, for in this view that text would not be apocryphal at all (though it remains so in what I have termed above an ‘ideological’ or aesthetic sense, in that most critics—Godden included—have found the work to be so inferior to others attributed to Alfred as to effect its *de facto* relegation to the ranks of apocrypha). At the same time, if we were to drop the Alfredian narrative, as Godden suggests, it frees us (if it does not force us) to look at these texts in new ways, or to look elsewhere, in time and place, for clues to their meaning.⁹³

Conclusions

Following from this, perhaps, one might argue that a more fruitful and interesting question than whether these two texts are ‘Apocryphal Alfrediana’ or not is that of how they were received and to what purpose they were put in the period *following* the heyday of Alfred’s reign and presumed institution of his

guesses, including secular clergy and the sons of the nobility, but the verse preface tells us that one copy was sent to a bishop which suggests the possibility that bishops were a primary readership, as with the *Pastoral Care*.” He is here speaking of the *OEGD*, though in the absence of any evidence at all one might also say the same of the *OEHE*.

92 See especially his remark that “There is no really reliable evidence that the project extended beyond the rather pedestrian translations of the works by Gregory, the *Dialogues* and the *Pastoral Care*.” Godden, “The Alfredian Project,” 121.

93 See Godden, “The Alfredian Project,” 122, for his conclusion.

program of translation. As much of the scholarship touched upon here has shown, there is a great deal of speculation based on little or unreliable evidence about whether, why and for whom Alfred translated or commissioned these works, and, barring the discovery of previously unknown written evidence, one may not feel confident that we shall ever be able to go beyond speculation with regards to these questions.

But in recent years there has been a significant surge in work on the evidence in the extant manuscripts that suggests *how* these texts were used in the post-Alfredian period. Whether this re-use always amounted to re-purposing is difficult to say (one must first know what the original purpose was in order to make that determination), but the traces left by a range of mostly anonymous readers of these manuscripts offer up intriguing insights into what they were interested in, and to what purpose they might have put what they found.⁹⁴

94 For examples of this recent work, see Mary Swan and Elaine Treharne (eds.), *Rewriting Old English in the Twelfth Century*, CSASE 30 (Cambridge: 2000), esp. chapters by Susan Irvine, "The Compilation and Use of Manuscripts Containing Old English in the Twelfth Century," 41–61, and Wendy Collier, "The Tremulous Worcester Hand and Gregory's *Pastoral Care*," 195–208; Franzen, *The Tremulous Hand of Worcester*; Joyce Hill, "The Dissemination of Ælfric's Lives of Saints: a Preliminary Survey," *Holy Men and Holy Women*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: 1996), 35–59; Susan Irvine (ed.), *Old English Homilies from MS Bodley 343*, EETS os 302 (Oxford: 1993); Irvine, "Linguistic Peculiarities in Late Copies of Ælfric and Their Editorial Implications," *Essays on Anglo-Saxon and Related Themes in Memory of Lynne Grundy*, ed. Jane Roberts and Janet Nelson, King's College London Medieval Studies 17 (London: 2000), 237–257; Collier, "Englishness' and the Worcester Tremulous Hand," *LSE*, n.s. 26 (1995): 35–47, and "A Thirteenth-Century User of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library Manchester* 79.3 (1997): 149–166; David F. Johnson, "Who Read Gregory's *Dialogues* in Old English?" *The Power of Words: Anglo-Saxon Studies Presented to Donald G. Scragg on his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Jonathan Wilcox and Hugh Magennis (Morgantown, WV: 2006), 171–204, and "Why Ditch the *Dialogues*? Reclaiming an Invisible Text," *Source of Wisdom: Old English and Early Medieval Latin Studies in Honour of Thomas D. Hill*, ed. Charles D. Wright, Frederick M. Biggs, and Thomas N. Hall (Toronto: 2007), 201–216; Johnson and Winfried Rudolph, "More Notes by Coleman," *Medium Ævum* 79 (2010): 1–13; Elizabeth A. McIntyre, "Early-twelfth-century Worcester Cathedral Priory with Special Reference to the Manuscripts Written There," D.Phil. Thesis, University of Oxford, 1979; Sharon Rowley, "The Fourteenth-Century Glosses and Annotations in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Tanner 10," *Manuscripta* 53 (2009): 49–85; Rodney M. Thomson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Medieval Manuscripts in Worcester Cathedral Library* (Cambridge: 2001) at p. xix; and Treharne, "Reading from the Margins: The Uses of Old English Homiletic Manuscripts in the Post-Conquest Period," *Beatus Vir: Studies in Early English and Norse Manuscripts in Memory of Phillip Pulsiano*, ed. A.N. Doane and Kirsten Wolf (Tempe, AZ: 2006), 329–358. An invaluable new online resource for anyone working on post-Conquest Old English

Rowley discusses such signs of use, both Anglo-Saxon and later medieval, in the manuscripts of the *OEHE*. Some of these reveal an interest in historical facts or figures, or aspects of language, or archival impulses, while the neumes in one of them, Rowley argues, “provide new insight into the interface between the oral and the written, as well as the link between preaching and history in Anglo-Saxon England.”⁹⁵ In her examination of the manuscripts of the *OEHE*, Rowley scrutinizes all of their signs of use, which comprise several layers applied by a variety of readers at disparate points in time. I am interested here in just one such layer, created by a man whose activities included an interest in both the *OEGD* and the *OEHE*, and as such constitute yet another point of contiguity between these two apocryphal Alfredian texts.⁹⁶

The Tremulous Hand of Worcester left his unmistakable mark on a significant number of Worcester manuscripts in the first half of the thirteenth century. His glosses, marginal annotations and markings of other kinds are found in over twenty manuscripts, and as Christine Franzen and Wendy Collier have shown, he devoted a great deal of effort to his study of the Old English texts they contain.⁹⁷ For our purposes it is most important to note that this late twelfth- to thirteenth-century scholar held an equally apparent interest in the two works that are the subject of this chapter: the Old English translations of Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History* and the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great. Of the manuscripts that have to date been identified as having attracted the interest of the Tremulous Hand, by far the greatest number contain homiletic

manuscripts is *The Production and Use of English Manuscripts 1060 to 1220*, edited by Orietta Da Rold, Takako Kato, Mary Swan and Elaine Treharne (University of Leicester 2010), available at <http://www.le.ac.uk/ee/em1060to1220>.

- 95 Rowley (*Old English Version*, 158) suggests that these signs of use in the manuscripts of the *OEHE* point to their having been used as sources for vernacular preaching or oral performance at refectory. We know that the latter was the case with the Latin *Dialogi* on the Continent; for evidence that this work was read by Benedictine monks at collations or in the refectory in the eleventh century and following, see Donatella Nebbiai-Dalla Guarda, “Les listes médiévales de lectures monastiques: Contribution à la connaissance des anciennes bibliothèques Bénédictines,” *Revue Bénédictine* 96 (1986): 271–326, at 275 and 278 (at Saint-Martial de Limoges), 288 and 290 (at Saints-Pierre-et-Paul de Conches), and 304 and 306 (at Reading in the fourteenth century). I owe these references to Prof. Thomas N. Hall.
- 96 For Rowley’s discussion of the signs of use and their meaning in the *OEHE* manuscripts, see *The Old English Version*, Chapters 8 and 9, 156–194.
- 97 See Franzen, *Tremulous Hand of Worcester*, especially Chapter 2, “The Manuscripts,” 29–83, and Chapter 6, “Some Thoughts on his Intentions,” 183–194; and Wendy Collier, “The Tremulous Worcester Hand,” “A Thirteenth-Century User,” and “Englishness”

material.⁹⁸ A smaller group of manuscripts contains material that may not be explicitly homiletic, but does suggest itself as of potential use to the Tremulous Hand if he was indeed mining these books for subject matter to be used in vernacular sermons of his own making.⁹⁹ Standing out from the rest in terms of their contents, then, are the manuscripts preserving two apparently non-homiletic vernacular works: the *OEHE* and *OEGD*.

Christine Franzen suggests that all of his interventions, where highly concentrated, may have been designed to aid him in producing an exemplar for an updated clean copy of the texts in question.¹⁰⁰ Wendy Collier concludes that these indications, together with his production of a Middle English version of Ælfric's *Grammar and Glossary*, show that he may have been intent upon producing "a vernacular pastoral handbook" in Middle English, for use in vernacular teaching and preaching.¹⁰¹ However this may be, it is clear that he had a special interest in works by Ælfric, an interest that emerges from Franzen's, Collier's and Treharne's studies of his annotations and glosses. This conclusion is corroborated by a less well-understood type of intervention by the Tremulous Hand, namely his selective re-punctuation of passages in the manuscripts he marked up in various ways.¹⁰² I have suggested elsewhere that such re-punctuation on the part of the Tremulous Hand indicates a high-level engagement with the Old English text, as opposed to the semantic tagging of his glossing. It is my view that the evidence of his punctuation interventions are indications of intended oral delivery, either for occasional recitation (Collations, refectory) or even for inclusion as exempla in his or someone else's sermons or the handbook for preaching posited by Collier. This prompts the question of precisely what that handbook would have looked like, and I believe that an important key to reconstructing that compilation must be a better understanding of

98 CCCC 162, CCCC 178, CCCC 198, Hatton 113, Hatton 114, Hatton 115, Hatton 116, Junius 121 and Cotton Otho B x all contain homilies. CCCC 557 contains a fragment of the Legend of the Cross which Ker says was part of a homily for the Invention of the Cross (*Catalogue*, p. 122).

99 CCCC 391 (prayers, prognostics), Laud Misc. 482 (ff. 13r–v, a penitential), and CCCC 12 and Hatton 20. The last two both contain Old English versions of Gregory's *Pastoral Care*. Finally, Worcester Cathedral MS F. 174—xiii was written by the Tremulous Hand and contains Ælfric's *Grammar and Glossary*, *St. Bede's Lament*, and the *Soul's Address to the Body*.

100 Franzen, *Tremulous Hand*, 190: "His early work in Middle English certainly suggests that preparing updated copies of vernacular literature was one of his original intentions, and perhaps it was at least partly to provide school texts."

101 Collier, "Tremulous Worcester Hand," 207.

102 See Johnson, "Who Read Gregory's *Dialogues*," especially 192.

the meaning of his punctuation interventions in this and the other manuscripts he marked up. But that is a subject for another study.¹⁰³

The available empirical evidence may never reveal to us precisely why the *OEGD* and the *OEHE* were translated and for whom. They may well be “Alfredian Apocrypha” in the strictest sense of the phrase, in that they were not written by Alfred and his interest in or even direct knowledge of them may have been minimal or non-existent. But to post-Alfredian readers they were certainly not apocryphal, and it is to the evidence left by those readers that we may perhaps most profitably turn for clues as to why and for whom Bede’s *HE* and Gregory’s *Dialogi* were translated into Old English.

103 I am currently working on such a study of the Tremulous Hand’s signs of use in these manuscripts that point to intended oral use and an analysis that will reconstruct the parameters of his putative Handbook.

Appendix

Annotated Bibliography on the Authorship Issue

Anlezark, Daniel, “Three Notes on the Old English *Meters of Boethius*,” *Notes and Queries* 51.1 (March 2004): 10–15.

Anlezark examines three passages in the *Meters* that differ from the prose rendering and concludes that they need not point to a different translator. Rather, the changes could indicate the different needs of verse and prose, scribal intervention, and Alfred’s own evolving interests.

Bately, Janet M., “The Alfredian Canon Revisited: One Hundred Years On,” in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Reuter, 107–120.

Bately reviews published work on authorship; briefly argues that evidence for the attribution of the *Pastoral Care*, the *Boethius*, the *Soliloquies*, the Prose Psalms of the Paris Psalter, and the Preface to the Laws to Alfred is strong; and writes that future changes to the canon will be minor. To illustrate, Bately considers the prose preface to the *Dialogues*, the closing prayer of the *Boethius*, and the prose proem to the *Boethius*, concluding that the first two are not by Alfred and the authorship of last cannot be decided with certainty.

——, “Did King Alfred Actually Translate Anything? The Integrity of the Alfredian Canon Revisited,” *Medium Ævum* 78 (2009): 189–215.

Bately responds to Godden, “Did King Alfred Write Anything?”; Treschow, Gill, and Swartz’s “A Stylometric Analysis”; and Treschow, Gill, and Swartz, “King Alfred’s Scholarly Writings” (each treated in its own entry, below). She argues that the seventeen “function words” of Treschow *et alia* combine headwords and inflectional forms, and they include homographs. She demonstrates that some of the keywords are also conditioned by context, either in the source text or the translation, and argues that keywords must be chosen differently. She examines several sets of words from both Treschow *et al.* and Godden, finding more similarities among the four texts most commonly associated with Alfred than differences.

——, “Lexical Evidence for the Authorship of the Prose Psalms in the Paris Psalter,” *ASE* 10 (1982): 69–95.

Bately examines the lexicon of the Prose Psalms in comparison with works ascribed to Alfred and works believed not to be by him. She concludes that the same translator (probably with help) rendered *PC*, *Boethius*, *Soliloquies*, and the Prose Psalms, and that other evidence gives us reason to name him Alfred.

Borinski, Ludwig, *Der Stil König Alfreds: Eine Studie zur Psychologie der Rede* (Leipzig: 1934).

Borinski undertakes a study of Alfred's style in his translation and its relationship to his thought. Borinski did not seek to demonstrate authorship but examined the works he believed to be Alfred's: the *Boethius*, *Pastoral Care*, *Soliloquies*, and the *Orosius*. He does note where he finds differences: for instance, *The Pastoral Care* remains closest to its source text of any of the four, while *Soliloquies* tends more towards redundancy. He finds the *Orosius*, which is now not ascribed to Alfred, to be the greatest outlier: it addresses the audience more directly than the others, with rhetorical questions, exclamations, and irony playing an important role. Some of the most notable characteristics of all four translations include a heavy use of amplification, use of functional equivalence in translation, reliance on verbs, a tendency to make abstract ideas more concrete, a decrease in logic, and an embrace of short clauses. The detailed study runs over 300 pages and covers many more points than this brief summary can.

Bromwich, John F., "Who Was the Translator of the Prose Portion of the Paris Psalter?" *The Early Cultures of North-West Europe (H.M. Chadwick Memorial Studies)*, ed. Cyril Fox and Bruce Dickins (Cambridge: 1950), 289–303.

Bromwich finds similarities in the phrasing of the Prose Psalms and the *Pastoral Care*, *Boethius*, *Orosius*, *Soliloquies*, and *Laws*. He finds differences between the Psalms on the one hand and the *Dialogues* and *OEHE* on the other, which he argues show that the similarities are not merely due to contemporaneity. He concludes that *OEHE* is unlikely to be by Alfred because of the differences.

Bruce, J.D., "The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Book of Psalms Commonly Known as the Paris Psalter," *PMLA* 9 (1894): 43–164; repr. as a separate volume (Baltimore: 1894).

This study was first a dissertation from John Hopkins University and was published by the MLA twice in the same year as completion of the thesis. Bruce compares and contrasts the OE Introductions to the Psalms with Latin commentaries and *In Psalmorum librum exegesis* and concludes that the former were used very little and the latter heavily. He argues that the translator's understanding of patristic approaches to the Psalms and his use of the argumenta from *In Psalmorum librum exegesis* show that he must have been a cleric and not a lay king. Mistakes in translation are ascribed to "his own indolence or over-confidence" or difficulty finding good texts and commentaries (144). Bruce dates the Prose Psalms to the late ninth or early tenth century.

Busse, Wilhelm G., "Die 'karolingische' Reform König Alfreds," *Karl der Große und das Erbe der Kulturen*, ed. Franz-Reiner Erkens (Berlin: 2001), 169–184.

Busse recounts conventional wisdom about which translations Alfred did himself and which he sponsored before suggesting that Alfred had too little time to do even the

translations credited to him, and that for an author to sign his works as Alfred appears to have done would be highly unusual at the time. He argues that clerical helpers did the work and used Alfred's name to authorize both the texts and the accompanying program of reform.

Carnicelli, Thomas A. (ed.), *King Alfred's Version of St. Augustine's Soliloquies* (Cambridge, MA: 1969).

In his Introduction, Carnicelli reviews connections between the *Soliloquies* and the *Boethius* (29–37) and then gives several reasons for believing Alfred to be the author of *Soliloquies*: his name as author in the epilogue; syntactical similarities with the *Pastoral Care*, the *Boethius*, and the *Orosius* (which Carnicelli ascribes to Alfred); borrowings from Boethius's *DCP* and Gregory's *Dialogi*, which Carnicelli believes Alfred knew; phrasing similar to the *PC* and the *Boethius*; and similarities in the kinds of additions in the *Soliloquies* and the *Bo* (38–39).

Clement, Richard W., "The Production of the *Pastoral Care*: King Alfred and His Helpers," in *Studies in Earlier Old English Prose*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: 1986), 129–152.

Clement writes at the outset, "although the helpers played an important role in the production of the work, Alfred's mind is undoubtedly the controlling element that motivates the translation" (130). Clement separates scribal variants from authorial variations, which he breaks into lexicon, introductory phrases for Biblical quotations, and explanatory editions. Major concerns of the translation include "clarity," "doctrinal modification" to "temper the harshness of Gregory's severity toward sinners" (138), the elaboration or introduction of metaphors, and additions regarding relations between kings and subjects. An "Afterword" finds literary and stylistic evidence to extend Alfred's authorship to the *Boethius*, *Soliloquies*, and the Prose Psalms.

Cockayne, Thomas Oswald, *The Shrine: A Collection of Occasional Papers on Dry Subjects* (London, 1864–70; repr. in one vol. 2011).

In "VI. Yule Week" (29–44), Cockayne prints an excerpt from the *OE Martyrology* and dates it to Alfred's reign. He defends his dating on the grounds that the hand of one manuscript resembles that in the Hatton manuscript of the *Pastoral Care*. He then prints further excerpts with some notes and quotations from sources he has identified in "VIII. King Ælfreds Book of Martyrs" (44–157; 157–158 is an index to the whole). Only the title here indicates an attribution to Alfred himself. A later piece in the collection, "Blooms by King Ælfred" (163–205), contains an edition of what we now call the *Soliloquies*, with a very small number of notes, some in brackets in the edition, some at the end. Cockayne attributes the work to Alfred in his title and his endnote without further comment.

Cook, A.S., *Biblical Quotations in Old English Prose Writers: Edited with the Vulgate and other Latin Originals, Introduction on Old English Biblical Versions, Index of Biblical Passages and Index of Principal Words* (London: 1898).

Studying a few particular words and phrases, Cook finds Alfred's work in Prose Psalms 1.1, 11.6, and probably 23.4; the rest of the Prose Psalms may or may not be his work. He takes as given Alfred's authorship of the *Pastoral Care*, the Laws, the *OEHE*, and the *Orosius*.

Deutschbein, Max. "Dialektisches in der ags. Uebersetzung von Bedas Kirchengeschichte," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 26 (1901): 169–244.

The majority of the extant translation of Bede's *HE* shows Northern or Mercian dialect characteristics, particularly in T, the earliest manuscript; Deutschbein concludes that the writer of the main translation was Anglian. Deutschbein identifies the hands of five scribes in MS T and sometimes analyzes their work separately; he also looks occasionally at MSS B, C, CA, and O in his detailed examination of phonology. He argues, however, that the portion of the *OEHE* that differs between T and B on the one hand, and C, Ca, and O on the other, is an exception to this Anglian dialect, and that it comes from a now-lost complete West Saxon translation. Ælfric knew this West Saxon translation and ascribed it to Alfred, who in Deutschbein's judgment probably commissioned rather than translated it.

Discenza, Nicole Guenther, "Alfred the Great and the Anonymous Prose Proem to the *Boethius*," *JEGP* 107 (2008): 57–76.

Discenza argues that the Prose Proem to the *Boethius* does not even pretend to be written by Alfred; it speaks of him in the third person. Ascribing the Proem to an anonymous author does not affect arguments about the authorship of the *Boethius* itself, except insofar as it indicates that an Anglo-Saxon not long after Alfred's own time seems to have believed him the translator of both prose and verse.

van Draat, P. Fijn. "The Authorship of the Old English *Bede*: A Study in Rhythm," *Anglia* 39 (1916): 319–346.

Van Draat argues that while other Alfredian translations contain "tautologies," usually because the translator cannot manage to render the Latin term in question with a single word, the *OEHE* contains 300 pairs with distinct rhythmic types, often echoing the Latin but sometimes using a different Latin *cursus*; 260 of the 300 are rhythmic. He counts only 156 pairs in the *Pastoral Care* with only 60 rhythmic, and he finds "charm" missing from those in the *PC* (333). The *Dialogues* have 398 tautologies, 288 rhythmic; other differences separate the *Dialogues* and the *OEHE*, but they form a group from which the *Pastoral Care* is excluded.

Earle, John, "Alfred as a Writer," in *Alfred the Great, containing Chapters on his Life and Times*, ed. Alfred Bowker (London: 1899), 169–205.

Earle starts from the assumption that Alfred translated the *Orosius*, *Boethius*, *Pastoral Care*, *Dialogues*, and *OEHE*, although he expresses uncertainty about whether Alfred himself or another versified the Meters of Boethius. He also mentions the Laws and Alfred's Will as the king's own, accepts Pauli's attribution of *Soliloquies* to Alfred, and notes that Cockayne and Wülker accept the OE *Martyrology* as Alfred's. He describes each of the texts in turn, with some quotations and close reading.

Frantzen, Allen J., "The Form and Function of the Preface in the Poetry and Prose of Alfred's Reign," *Alfred the Great*, ed. T. Reuter, 121–136.

Frantzen spends part of the chapter distinguishing preludes from overtures and readerly from writerly prefaces. He expresses doubts about Alfred's authorship of the prose preface to the *Boethius* (132–133) due to the presence of a modesty topos and cautions to the reader, neither of which appear in Alfred's other prefaces. Frantzen finds the Prose and Verse Preface to the *PC* more in accord with the rest of Alfred's work, and complementary to each other. He concludes that all the prefaces are performances, some perhaps by committee rather than individual, and that they are part of complicated manuscript contexts that should not be neglected.

———, *King Alfred*, Twayne's English Authors Series 425 (Boston: 1986).

In this introductory text, Frantzen accepts the attribution of five works to Alfred: the laws, *PC*, *Boethius*, *Soliloquies*, and Prose Psalms (7–8); each text then receives its own chapter, and each chapter begins with a very short review of the evidence for Alfred's authorship of that text.

Gill, Paramjit S., Tim B. Swartz, and Michael Treschow, "A Stylometric Analysis of King Alfred's Literary Works," *Journal of Applied Statistics* 34:10 (2007): 1251–1258.

The authors begin with seven texts: *Pastoral Care*, *Boethius*, *Soliloquies*, *Dialogues*, *OEHE*, *Orosius*, and the Prose Psalms of the Paris Psalter. They identify a set of seventeen function words that they argue are not context dependent, then analyze their frequency in chosen texts in various agglomerations. Using Bayesian techniques, they find it probable that the first three of their texts were by the same author, and the last four are not—removing the Prose Psalms from the Alfredian canon.

See Bately, "Did King Alfred Actually Translate?," for a response.

See Treschow, Gill, and Swartz, "King Alfred's Scholarly Writings," for these scholars' further work with computational mathematics.

Godden, Malcolm R., "The Alfredian Project and its Aftermath: Rethinking the Literary History of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries," Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture, 15 January 2009, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 162 (2009): 93–122.

Godden argues for a very limited Alfredian project that includes only the *Dialogues* and *Pastoral Care*, close translations done for bishops. The *Boethius* and *Soliloquies*, by contrast, break the bounds of orthodox philosophy and reflect negatively on kings; Godden rejects the idea that they came from the king's pen or even his court. The *Martyrology* and *Orosius* may have preceded Alfred's program, making it "much less novel than Alfred claims" (120). Examining other works without assuming Alfredian connections produces "a narrative that looks rather like the story we already have for Old English poetry: a variety of prose works, written by various people at different times over the ninth and early tenth centuries and in different contexts...for readers who were often themselves intelligent and educated" (121–122). The Laws and Prose Psalms are not treated.

——, "Did King Alfred Write Anything?" *Medium Ævum* 76 (2007), 1–23.

The main arguments are very similar to those in the Gollancz lecture, above. Godden argues that neither the *Dialogues* nor the *PC* were translated by Alfred (whose Latin was so poor that he needed the *Dialogues* translated) but that they were translations done for bishops with Latin too poor for the source text. To cover the embarrassment of such bishops, the Preface celebrates a program of translation and education that was pure literary fabrication, not historical fact. The *Boethius* and *Soliloquies* were "bold rewritings of texts known at the time to be difficult, dangerous, and distinctly heterodox" (107) not undertaken at Alfred's court, let alone by the king. Again, Godden limits the program to the two Gregorian texts; he suggests that other translations (here *Martyrology* and *OEHE*) may have preceded the program, and he does not address the Laws or the Prose Psalms.

——, "Editing Old English and the Problem of Alfred's *Boethius*," *The Editing of Old English: Papers from the 1990 Manchester Conference*, ed. Donald G. Scragg and Paul E. Szarmach with Helene Scheck and Holly Holbrook (Cambridge: 1994), 163–176.

This piece focuses primarily on editing the *Boethius* in its two versions, declaring Sedgefield's edition "one of the minor tragedies of Anglo-Saxon literary scholarship" (163). Godden touches on authorship mostly in passing rather than offering a concerted argument about it. He credits Alfred with the prose and verse renderings of the *De consolazione* (including both prefaces) and even deems it likely that Alfred organized the division of Bodley 180 into 42 chapters and wrote the table of contents, which reveals "an intelligent understanding of the underlying themes of the translation" (165). See Godden's work from 2006 on for a very different view of Alfred's authorship.

——, "King and Counselor in the Alfredian *Boethius*," in *Intertexts: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture Presented to Paul E. Szarmach*, ed. Virginia Blanton and Helene Scheck (Tempe, AZ: 2008), 191–208.

Most of the chapter concerns Latin *vitae* of Boethius that traveled with the *De consolatione* rather than the OE *Boethius*. When Godden turns to the *Boethius*, he concludes that the Anglo-Saxon author emphasizes Theoderic's tyranny. Godden finds it unlikely that Alfred, a king himself, would paint such a sympathetic portrait of the rebellious Boethius and such a negative one of a king.

—, “The Latin Commentary and the Old English Text; Authorship and Kingship,” reported at the fourth annual symposium of The Alfredian Boethius Project, University of Oxford, August 2006. Retrieved from <http://www.english.ox.ac.uk/boethius/Symposium2006.html>

Godden compares specific glosses to the Latin and Old English text, revealing an author both “learned and confident” (6) and very interested in kingship, but likely not a king himself, since he treats kings negatively in the *Boethius*.

—, “The Player King: Identification and Self-Representation in King Alfred's Writings,” in *Alfred the Great*, ed. T. Reuter, 137–150.

Godden examines the dialogues in the *Boethius* and the *Soliloquies*. He argues that the translator adds references to Theoderic and expands references to other kings—all of them tyrants—in the *Boethius*. A king's perspective only appears in Chapter 17, where, according to Godden, the speech belongs to an unauthoritative narrator who was never king. Wisdom's corrections of him then undercut the passage. Both the *Boethius* and the *Soliloquies* add biographical details to set their narrators in historical context; reminding audiences of their historical distance reduces the texts' claims to universal truth. Most intriguingly, rulers are almost invariably viewed from a courtier's perspective. Godden closes by wondering whether King Alfred's is the voice in these translations at all.

—, “Stories from the Court of King Alfred,” in *Saints and Scholars: New Perspectives on Anglo-Saxon Literature and Culture in Honour of Hugh Magennis*, ed. Stuart McWilliams (Cambridge: 2012), 123–140.

This piece deals primarily with Asser's *Life of Alfred* and the Preface to the *Pastoral Care*, treating them both as “stories” that show “striking differences, which seem to reflect different agendas and perspectives, or a different take on a panegyric tradition” (123). From Asser, Godden concludes that Alfred's transformation in 887 was “the moment when Alfred began, like a penitent sinner, to apply himself zealously to the study of the Bible” (131). Alfred longed to be like the learned men of his court but never managed, nor was he capable of translating Latin texts. Where Asser notes the recruitment of Mercians, the Preface to the *PC* emphasizes scholars from the continent, a “denial of Mercian scholarship [that] should perhaps be seen as a political move, to assert the primacy of West Saxon achievements, and the king's own role” (135). Alfred's Preface casts Wærferth as the recipient of Alfred's help; Asser casts him as a learned

translator who helped Alfred by rendering Gregory's *Dialogues*. Both Asser and the Preface draw on Carolingian panegyric tradition, but in different ways, and show the deliberate creation of legends in Alfred's own time.

——, "Wærferth and King Alfred: The Fate of the Old English *Dialogues*," in *Alfred the Wise: Studies in Honour of Janet Bately on the Occasion of her Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. Jane Roberts and Janet L. Nelson with Malcolm Godden (Cambridge: 1997), 35–51.

Godden argues that the prose preface in the voice of Alfred was not written by Alfred himself, but probably by Wærferth, though "the use of [Alfred's] voice strongly argues that he was responsible for the issuing or circulation of the translation" (38). The existence of a copy with a poetic preface in which the book speaks suggests that the verse preface, addressed to Wulfstan, originally accompanied an early copy, made before the composition of the prose preface. The rest of the item treats Wærferth's methods and competence in translation.

Godden, Malcolm, and Susan Irvine (eds.), with Mark Griffith and Rohini Jayatilaka, *The Old English Boethius: An Edition of the Old English Versions of Boethius's De Consolatione Philosophiae* (Oxford, 2009).

Authorship is discussed particularly in vol. 1, "The Relation of the OE Boethius to Other Alfredian Texts," 135–139, and "Authorship and Date," 140–151, but the issue also arises elsewhere in the introduction and occasionally in the Commentary (vol. 2). Both prefaces claim that Alfred both made the prose translation and versified the Meters. Yet Griffith concludes in his section on the Meters that the failure to recognize that some passages were meters, the inability to identify the end of the Orpheus meter, and some errors in translation all suggest that the versifier was not the prose translator (80–134). The editors deem the relationship between the *Boethius* and the *Soliloquies* so close that the two texts must have had the same translator, but they find little similarity to the *Orosius*, the *Pastoral Care*, the Prose Psalms, the *OEHE*, or the *Dialogues* (135–139). No evidence contemporary with Alfred associates him with the translation, and the prefaces to the *Boethius* are not in the voice of Alfred. The translator displays much learning, more than a king or even helpers at Alfred's court should have. Godden and Irvine do not accept Warrick's argument (below) for two translators. They see the negative representations of kings as reason to doubt the translation came from a royal court. Both prose and meters can be dated somewhere between 890 and 950 (140–151).

Griffiths, Bill (ed.), *Alfred's Metres of Boethius* (Middlesex, England: 1991). See especially "The Authorial Debate," 33–43.

Griffiths surveys the differences between the prose and Meters and finds a variety of reasons for changes that "do not seem much different from the sort of changes made in

the first stage of the translation process" (37). He is uncertain that the Prose Proem is by Alfred, but notes that a different writer does not mean the information is false; he finds the Verse Proem not inconsistent with Alfred's work. Æthelweard and William of Malmesbury ascribed the *Boethius* to Alfred. The late-fourteenth-century *Liber de Hyda* attributes the Meters to Wærferth, but it does so in an odd sentence that may have been miscopied. Griffiths finds the vocabulary, morphology, lexicon, "crudeness of the verse technique" (42), similarities between the Meters and the metrical prologue and epilogue to *PC*, and knowledge of the prose text all consonant with Alfred as versifier.

Hargrove, Henry Lee, "Introduction," *King Alfred's Old English Version of St. Augustine's Soliloquies* (New York: 1902), xv–lvii.

Hargrove notes that the copyist has somewhat obscured the early West Saxon dialect but accepts Alfred's authorship throughout. He compares Alfred's tastes to St. Augustine's and relates the *Soliloquies* to other texts attributed to Alfred, particularly the *Boethius*; here, he relies heavily on Hubbard's work (see below), although he also refers to the *Pastoral Care*.

Hart, J.M., "Rhetoric in the Translation of Bede," in *An English Miscellany Presented to Dr. Furnivall in Honour of his Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, ed. W.P. Ker, A.S. Napier, and W.W. Skeat (Oxford: 1901), 150–154.

Hart argues that the style of the *OEHE* and the *Pastoral Care* are too different for the works to share a translator, highlighting the use of word pairs in the *Bede* by contrast with the Latin source text.

Hartmann, K.A. Martin, "Ist König Alfred der Verfasser der alliterierenden Übertragung der Metra des Boetius?" *Anglia* 5 (1882): 411–450.

Hartmann argues that the failure to versify some meters indicates not incompetence of another party reading tags to the meters, but instead that Alfred decided while making his prose translation not to versify these few. He deliberately gave different tags to meters he chose not to turn into poetry. Hartmann offers as support the fact that I.m.7 is versified despite lacking any tag marking it as verse. Given that Alfred has errors in his prose, errors in the verse, even where they differ from the prose, need not indicate another translator. The prose foreword is Alfred's and says he versified the Meters, and the verse translator identifies himself with the prose translator. Hartmann finds the Meters' image of the egg, though lacking from the prose, similar to Alfred's other everyday images, and the vocabulary consistent with Alfred's.

Herzfeld, George, *An Old English Martyrology, Re-edited from Manuscripts in the Libraries of the British Museum and of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge* (London, 1900).

In "Date and Place of Origin," section III of his introduction (xix–xxxii), Herzfeld demonstrates that the dialect is Mercian and explicitly rejects Cockayne's conclusion that the *Martyrology* is Alfred's work.

Hubbard, Frank G., "The Relation of the 'Blooms of King Alfred' to the Anglo-Saxon Translation of Boethius," *MLN* 9 (1894): 161–171.

Using the older title *Blooms* for the *Soliloquies*, Hubbard shows close connections between the *Soliloquies* and the *Boethius* to demonstrate that the two share an author. He divides these into verbal echoes, including formulas of transition, agreement or disagreement, doubt, query, and satisfaction; passages where two Latin works diverge, but the translations show much similarity; passages where additions to the *Soliloquies* resemble parts of the *Boethius* based on the Latin source text; one case in which an addition to the *Boethius* resembles the *Soliloquies* in OE and in Latin; additions to both which resemble each other; and common themes. He concludes that the same translator rendered both, and that the *Boethius* preceded the *Soliloquies*. He ends by noting two similarities between these two works and the *Pastoral Care*, upon which he only comments that more study is needed.

Kirby, D.P., "Asser and His Life of King Alfred," *Studia Celtica* 6 (1971): 12–35.

This piece primarily analyzes how various elements of Asser's *Vita Alfredi* fit together. Kirby contends that the *Vita* is a draft, an imperfect integration of what had been several separate pieces on the king. He argues briefly that what we know of Alfred's activities would allow for translation to occur after 893, while Viking attacks occurred but were not focused on Wessex. The story of Alfred learning to read suddenly emphasizes Asser's relationship with Alfred at the expense of other learned men who may have been instructing the king. Kirby closes by speculating that the passages on kingship in the *Boethius* and perhaps the *Soliloquies* "reflect not the contributions of the king...but his ecclesiastical entourage taking advantage of the unique opportunity afforded to instruct the king in good conduct by appropriate interpolations" (34), contributing also to the myth of Alfred's wisdom.

Kuhn, Sherman M., "The Authorship of the Old English Bede Revisited," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 73 (1972): 172–180. Volume also titled *Studies Presented to Tauno F. Mustanoja on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday*.

Kuhn reviews arguments about the *OEHE*'s authorship made since his 1947 article (see next item), particularly those made by Whitelock (see below). He reiterates that the mixture of dialect forms derives from the use of glosses by Alfred, who spoke West Saxon himself but had Mercian helpers and a Mercian wife. "Ælfric must have known men whose fathers had known Alfred" (179), and William of Malmesbury was librarian of a monastery with close ties to Winchester; these men knew better than modern

scholars the identity of the translator. The main new argument Kuhn offers is that the *OEHE* is Alfred's last work, done after some of his most trusted helpers had left the court and during Viking attacks. Thus Alfred relied more heavily on glosses than in other translations, but some passages also demonstrate maturity.

——, "Synonyms in the Old English Bede," *JEGP* 46 (1947): 168–176.

Kuhn argues that Hart has exaggerated the rhetorical element in the word pairs in the *OEHE* and that these doublets add little to the text. Instead, in Kuhn's account, they demonstrate that the translation originated in a gloss to the Latin text, for glosses tend to accumulate synonyms; that gloss was Mercian. He concludes that the use of a Mercian gloss means that we cannot rule out a West Saxon author, possibly even Alfred.

Leicht, Alfred, "Ist König Ælfred der Verfasser der Alliterierenden Metra des Boetius?" *Anglia* 6 (1883): 126–170.

Leicht accepts that Alfred translated the prose *Boethius* but finds insufficient external evidence for his authorship of the verse Meters: the Meters cannot be dated accurately, Alfred did not necessarily write the verse prologue crediting him with the Meters, and it is not at all clear why Alfred would want to versify the translations he had already done. The Meters offer virtually no ideas that are new or independent of the prose, except for some mistakes and the image of the egg in Meter 20. The latter is too detailed to be appropriate for the Meters, in Leicht's opinion. Other additions are minor or only repeat ideas from the prose. Leicht concludes that if Alfred had versified the Meters, he would have found more to say and expanded their meaning, both because he would have been older and because of the new form. Leicht finds the poetry poor and thinks that Alfred would have done better. He concludes that the versifier was not a very good poet but invoked Alfred's name as justification for the work.

——, "Zur Angelsächsischen Bearbeitung des Boetius," *Anglia* 7 (1884): 178–202.

When he revisits the question of authorship in the *Boethius*, Leicht argues that evidence for Alfred's authorship of the prose prologue is not as weak as that for the verse prologue, but that neither can be conclusively ascribed to him. Comparing the prose *Boethius* to Alfred's other works produces evidence for Alfred's authorship of the prose portions, but it is more difficult to determine whether he wrote the Meters. Leicht then turns to the relationship of the *OE* to the Latin, noting that part of the first book of the *De consolazione* is missing from the translation; Leicht says that we cannot rule out a lacuna in the source text manuscript as the reason for the loss, but most likely Alfred simply cut certain portions because they would have required too much explanation. Leicht emphasizes the freedom of the translation and the Christian influence, and he finds Alfred's emphasis on human freedom foreign to Boethius.

Liggins, Elizabeth M., "The Authorship of the Old English *Orosius*," *Anglia* 88 (1970): 289–322.

Liggins compares the syntax of *Orosius* with that in the *PC*, *Boethius*, and *Soliloquies* as texts by Alfred, and the *OEHE* as a text not by Alfred. She examines temporal, causal, conditional, and concessive clauses, as well as use of the subjunctive, periphrastic verb constructions, participles, pronouns, subordinate clauses, and periphrasis. She concludes that in combination, these factors set the *Orosius* apart from all the other texts she studies and rule out authorship by Alfred, Wærferth, and the translator of the *OEHE*. She observes a change in style at 3.7, more errors of interpretation in Books 4 and 5 than before, and such a different style in Book 6 that she feels that translator cannot be responsible for any of the earlier books. She suggests further study of similarities between the *Orosius* and early sections of the *Chronicle*.

March, Francis A.: see J.W. Pearce, below.

Metcalfe, Allan A., "On the Authorship and Originality of the *Meters of Boethius*," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 71 (1970): 185–187.

Metcalfe does not take a side in the debate in this short piece but reminds readers that independence from the prose would not have been valued whether the metricist were Alfred himself or someone else.

Miller, Thomas (ed. and trans.), *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, EETS OS 95, 96, 110, 111 (London: 1890–98).

Miller examines the language of the manuscripts to conclude that the language of the archetype is Mercian, ruling out Alfred as author (xxvi–xlx).

O'Neill, Patrick P., "Authorship," *King Alfred's Old English Prose Translation of the First Fifty Psalms*, Medieval Academy Books 104 (Cambridge, MA: 2001), 73–96.

O'Neill begins by listing evidence for Alfred's authorship: William of Malmesbury's mention, which specifically refers to a paraphrase of the first fifty Psalms; the Latin sources, which suggest a date of composition consistent with Alfred; "the pragmatic approach to translating Scripture" (74); four specific practices in translation; linguistic evidence; shared syntax with Alfred's other translations; and vocabulary (73–78). He analyzes eight quotations from the *PC* from the first fifty Psalms and finds both some notable similarities, and some differences, which he attributes primarily to the contexts of the quotations in Gregory. O'Neill then shows parallels in phrasing between the Psalms and Alfred's other works; additions to Psalms, the *Boethius*, and the *Soliloquies*, "which agree in both content and phrasing" independent of the Latin sources (85); additions to the Psalms that resemble translated passages in Alfred's other works; additions to other works that resemble translated passages in the Psalms; and "idiosyncratic

translations of certain Latin words and phrases" shared by Psalms and Alfred's other translations (91).

Otten, Kurt, *König Alfreds Boethius*, Studien zur englischen Philologie, neue Folge no. 3. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1964.

Otten starts from the position that Alfred translated the *Boethius*, accepting William of Malmesbury's testimony that he did so from a paraphrase made by Asser. He reads both Latin and OE texts closely with particular interests in changes, and he attributes the development of the theme of tyranny to Alfred's own interest in kingship and in tyranny not as an image but as a reality. Otten also identifies sources, including commentaries on the *De consolazione* (whose use was limited) and works by the Church fathers, especially Augustine and to some extent Gregory. He treats the philosophy and theology of the translation in detail and finds it more Augustinian than Boethian.

Pauli, R., *König Ælfred und seine Stelle in der Geschichte Englands* (Berlin, 1851), particularly 212–247; also available as *The Life of Alfred the Great, Translated from the German of Dr. R. Pauli...*, trans. B. Thorpe (London and New York: 1853), particularly 164–192.

On the basis of style and early attribution, Pauli credits Alfred with a now-lost handbook, the *Boethius*, the *Orosius*, the *Old English Historia Ecclesiastica*, and the *Pastoral Care*. He notes that Alfred did not himself write the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle or the *Dialogues* but commissioned the latter and possibly the former. He finds the *Soliloquies* most likely translated by an unknown twelfth century author. On the basis of style, language, and in some cases only late attribution, Pauli rejects Alfred's authorship of the *Boethius's* Prose Proem, the Meters of Boethius, the Psalms, a translation of Aesop's Fables, a treatise on hawking, and the early Middle English *Proverbs of Alfred*.

Payne, F. Anne, *King Alfred and Boethius: An Analysis of the Old English Version of the Consolation of Philosophy*, Madison/Milwaukee: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1968.

Payne takes Alfred's authorship as a given and explores how the *Boethius* reveals the king's philosophy and personality. She concludes that Alfred had serious disagreements with Boethius: Alfred saw God in terms of power rather than order (in line with his own role as king), rejected Boethius's notion of eternity, emphasized freedom of action rather than freedom of mind, redeemed earthly goods from Boethius's condemnation, understood God's Providence differently, and made Wisdom less of an authority than Philosophy (even while adding attributes of Christ to the character). Payne concludes that the work is not wholly successful because of "a discrepancy between thought and style, between Alfred's ideas and the form in which they are presented" (136). Boethius's logical form and absolute Latin terminology do not fit Alfred's own

emphasis on doing and becoming, but Alfred came to learning too late in life to have the confidence to write his own, independent work.

Pearce, J.W., "Did Alfred Translate the *Historia Ecclesiastica*?" *PMLA* 7, Appendix: Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Meeting of the Modern Language Association of America (1892): vi–x.

Alfred did not have time to do all the translations attributed to him, Pearce writes, and the *OEHE* differs substantially from other translations. It even differs internally; Pearce finds wide variation in how literally and competently the Latin is translated, vocabulary, and the treatment of dates. He concludes that multiple translators were involved: one for the Preface who translated no other part, possibly one for the chapter headings only, one for Chapters 1–6 and 8, and another for the rest. The item ends with a relevant comment by another scholar: Francis A. March argues that scholars have always known Alfred used helpers, as have other translators.

Potter, Simeon, *On the Relation of the Old English Bede to Werferth's Gregory and to Alfred's Translations* (Prague: 1931).

Potter finds the *OEHE* and *OEGD* close enough in language and technique that they may be by the same author, although he deems the evidence insufficient to be sure; the *OEHE* omits much more than the *OEGD*, in which "not a single sentence is omitted" (72). He judges the *Pastoral Care* a better translation than either the *OEHE* or *OEGD* and finds it close except for additions, usually explanatory. He rules out Alfred's authorship for all these texts because they differ so much from the *Orosius*, the *Boethius*, and the *Soliloquies*, which he finds to be the work of one translator more concerned with ideas than with words—a king in the last years of his life.

Pratt, David, *The Political Thought of King Alfred the Great*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Fourth Series 67 (Cambridge: 2007).

Pratt treats the five works he ascribes to Alfred as rhetorical tools for kingship and puts them in the broader context of Alfred's other techniques for ruling. Here, he does not argue explicitly for Alfred's authorship so much as he shows what the works have in common with Alfred's other methods and achievements. Each of the five works receives its own chapter.

——, "Problems of Authorship and Audience in the Writings of King Alfred the Great," in *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World*, ed. Patrick Wormald and Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge, 2007), 162–191.

Pratt argues that the "royal corpus," the five works attributed to Alfred, display not only dialectal, syntactic, and lexical distinctiveness, but a distinct construction of authorial persona that cannot be denied. Where contemporary texts remain anonymous, four

of these five texts bear Alfred's name. Alfred worked and lived closely with his thegns, which would have made it difficult to maintain a fictive authorship. The king's authority undergirds his texts, and specifically royal authority provides key images for learning and wisdom within the *Soliloquies*. Concern over loyalty and betrayal of a lord strongly flavors the *Boethius*. The *Pastoral Care*, Psalms, and Introduction to the Laws speak more from royal positions: that of a ruler, that of King David, and that of a lawgiver walking in the footsteps of Moses. The king's agency demands more attention than it has received and can show us much both about the authorship of these texts, their methods of composition, and the workings of their rhetoric.

Reuter, Timothy (ed.), *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences* (Aldershot: 2003).

See Janet M. Bately, "The Alfredian Canon Revisited: One Hundred Years On"; Allen J. Frantzen, "The Form and Function of the Preface in the Poetry and Prose of Alfred's Reign"; and Malcolm R. Godden, "The Player King: Identification and Self-Representation in King Alfred's Writings."

Sedgefield, Walter John, *King Alfred's Old English Version of Boethius De Consolatione Philosophiae* (Oxford: 1899).

Sedgefield notes the ascription of the text to Alfred by Æthelweard, William of Malmesbury, Robert Plot [a seventeenth-century antiquarian], and the *Liber monasterii de Hyda*. He finds no reason to doubt these testimonies (xxxvi–xxxviii). Sedgefield briefly reviews scholarship on the Meters and concludes that the prefaces support Alfredian authorship, the language and meter are consistent with Alfred's authorship, and the case against Alfred has not been proven (xxxviii–xli).

Sisam, Kenneth, "The Authorship of the Verse Translation of Boethius's *Metra*," *Studies in the History of Old English Literature* (Oxford: 1953), 293–297.

Sisam rejects dialectal arguments against Alfred's authorship on the grounds that Alfred was married to a Mercian and advised by at least one. He considers the possibility that someone else wrote the Prose Proem but finds no motive for anyone to forge all or part of it. He finds West Saxon prose influence alongside Anglian words in the verse and concludes that Alfred did a sound if unspectacular job of versifying his own prose.

Smyth, Alfred P., *King Alfred the Great* (Oxford: 1995).

The book's main argument is that Asser's *Life of Alfred* is a later forgery and distorts later understandings of the king, but Smyth does treat Alfred's program in the course of reviewing Alfred's life and accomplishments without Asser's portrayal. He argues that prefaces to the various works were written in Alfred's name but not necessarily by

him. Yet Alfred did take a role in the translation of the *Pastoral Care*, the *Boethius*, the *Soliloquies*, and the Prose Psalms. He sponsored the *Dialogues*, charters, the Law Code that bears his name, and the treaty with Guthrum; produced during his kingship, and perhaps with his “encouragement” (529), are the *Orosius*, the *OEHE*, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the OE *Martyrology*, and possibly Bald’s *Leechbook*. Further arguments concern audience, method, and Alfred’s education and temperament.

Treschow, Michael, Paramjit Gill, and Tim B. Swartz, “King Alfred’s Scholarly Writings and the Authorship of the First Fifty Prose Psalms,” *Heroic Age* 12 (May 2009), online: <http://www.heroicage.org/issues/12/treschowgillswartz.php>

The authors extend their consideration of Alfredian authorship to include historical and literary factors, then argue that traditional lexical analysis is inadequate. They return to computer-based stylometric analysis, specifically Principle Component Analysis and Bayesian Cluster analysis, to conclude that the *Pastoral Care*, *Boethius*, and *Soliloquies* share a translator, but the Prose Psalms had a different translator.

See also Gill, Swartz, and Treschow, “A Stylometric Analysis,” above; and for a response, Bately, “Did King Alfred Translate,” also above.

Waite, Gregory, *Old English Prose Translations of King Alfred’s Reign*, Annotated Bibliographies of Old and Middle English Literature 6 (Rochester, NY, 2000).

This bibliography does not make arguments but offers invaluable guidance to scholarship on Alfred and on the *Pastoral Care*, *Boethius*, *Soliloquies*, Prose Psalms of the Paris Psalter, *Orosius*, *OE Ecclesiastical History*, and *Dialogues*, starting with late medieval scholarship and running through 1996.

Warrick, Catherine Mary, “The Two Translators of the Old English *Boethius*,” Diss. Indiana U, 1967 [*DAI* 29 (1968): 582A].

Warrick argues that two different translators rendered the *Boethius*. Translator A did Books I and II of the Latin, equivalent to OE chapters 1–21: he always refers to Boethius in the third person with a strong preference for *Mod*. He removes physical description to make the characters more abstract and omits all praise or defense of Boethius by himself or Philosophy. His additions are usually historical or Christianizing, though sometimes they elaborate unnecessarily. Figurative language is rare, and both sides of the dialogue are shortened while the verbs *andwyrðan* and *andswarian* are used heavily for various Latin verbs of speaking. Warrick argues that Translator B rendered most of III through V in the Latin, Chapters 22–42 in the OE. Translator B uses the first-person *ic* for Boethius with exceptions in four passages, all corresponding to Latin Book III and some using the verb *andswarian*, indicating that A may have taken a stab at that book as well. Otherwise, *andwyrðan* and *andswarian* are rare except when the Latin verb is “answered.” She finds Wisdom, if anything, even more sympathetic than in the Latin. The healing imagery

remains in the text and is even added, and B makes more use of figurative language and recapitulations. Additions here vary more but are more purposeful and are of five main types: mythological, Christianizing, exemplary, clarifying, and reiterating. B adds exchanges to the dialogue, but, near the end of Book IV, he admits his weariness and makes more cuts and fewer additions. Warrick concludes that the most likely reason for the two voices is that B did a full translation, which A then reworked but abandoned in Book III of the Latin. She speculates that B could have been Asser and A, Alfred; perhaps the prose-only version was not meant to circulate but intended to be developed into a prosimetrum. She also finds that the model of two translators complements or adds nuance to work by Frank Hubbard, Simeon Potter, Ludwig Borinski, and Kurt Otten.

Whitelock, Dorothy, "The Old English Bede," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 48 (1962): 57–90.

Whitelock studies the methods of the translator of the *OEHE*, which, she finds, differ from Alfred's. This translator is close and literal in some passages and freer in others, but not as free as Alfred was even in the *PC*. The unknown translator's knowledge is commensurate with his Mercian dialect. Attributions of the work to Alfred are later and unreliable. No evidence connects Alfred to the work as translator or even patron; the *OEHE* shows no knowledge of other works by Alfred and his circle, nor do any of those works show knowledge of the *OEHE*. The extracts in BL Cotton Domitian.ix show that the translation cannot have been done too long after Alfred's death, but no earlier limit can be set. She also eliminates Wærferth as author due differences in dialect and diction.

Wichmann, Johannes, "König Ælfred's angelsächsischen Übertragung der Psalmen I–LI excl," *Anglia* 11 (1889): 39–96.

Wichmann examines multiple aspects of the Prose Psalms of the Paris Psalter, beginning with the Latin source text; like previous scholars, he finds that it resembles but is not identical to the Romanum. He deems the introductions dependent upon patristic commentary. He rules out Aldhelm as the translator, given the differences in style between the English prose translation and the Latin prose and poetry of Aldhelm. Asser and later medieval English historians described the importance of the Psalms to Alfred, and William of Malmesbury credited the king with the translation of the first fifty Psalms. Wichmann studies the phonology and inflection of the Prose Psalms; then method, style, and vocabulary, particularly in comparison with the *PC*, secondarily the *Orosius*, and occasionally other works (some by Alfred, some from the rest of the corpus of OE). He examines omissions and additions in the translation, and finally compares the methods to the handling of Psalm quotations in the *PC*. Wichmann concludes that Alfred did indeed translate the Psalms, and that the chronology of his translations followed this order: *PC*, *OEHE*, *Orosius*, *Bo*, *Soliloquies*, and Psalms.

Wright, Thomas, "King Alfred," *Biographia Britannica Literaria I: Anglo-Saxon Period* (London: 1842), 384–405.

Wright attributes to Alfred the *Orosius*, *OEHE*, *PC*, *Soliloquies*, *Boethius*, a lost handbook of quotations, and possibly the Psalms; he excludes the laws from consideration as not literary. He rejects the claims for Alfred's authorship of the "Proverbs of Alfred," a translation of Aesop's *Fables*, and the Meters of Boethius (see also in the same volume 55–57, where he points out an error in the versification). He gives brief explanations of why he denies claims, and only "The following works were written by Alfred, or have been attributed to him" (393) for the ones he accepts.

Wuelcker [=Wülker], Richard Paul, "Über die angelsächsische Bearbeitung der Soliloquien Augustins," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 4 (1877): 101–131.

Wülker rejects two arguments against Alfred's authorship immediately: he responds to the point that Alfred's name does not appear at the start of the *Soliloquies* by saying that it does not appear at the start of the *Boethius*, *Bede*, or *Orosius* either, and he declares the differences in dialect due to the late copy. He briefly examines unusual words that the *Soliloquies* shares with *Bo* and subsequently notes interests shared between the two works. Most of the article recounts the argument of texts with special attention to changes or additions, some of which he dubs "kingly." He concludes by answering the charge that no later author lists the *Soliloquies* among Alfred's works by pointing to references to Alfred's Handbook. He believes that the three books of the OE *Soliloquies* are just the beginning of Alfred's florilegium, which originally contained pieces from other church fathers but were subsequently lost.

Wülker [=Wülcker], Richard Paul, "König Ælfred und sein Kreis," in his *Grundriss zur Geschichte der angelsächsischen Litteratur mit einer Übersicht der angelsächsischen Sprachwissenschaft* (Leipzig: 1885), 387–451.

Wülker traces Alfred's life as well as his works, with mention of Alfred's Handbook, a compilation of Scriptural and patristic excerpts. He provides a summary of a dozen earlier scholars' ascriptions of works to Alfred (393) before attempting to establish a chronology of Alfred's works himself largely on the basis of how free each translation is. He puts the *PC* first, around 890, with the *Bede* and *Orosius* next, in that order, between 890 and 893; then the *Boethius* and *Soliloquies* follow, 897–901. More detailed treatments of each text, including arguments for Alfred's authorship of the *Soliloquies*, follow. He reviews evidence for and against Alfred's authorship of the Meters of Boethius and concludes that supporters of Alfred's authorship do not have sufficient evidence. Noting William of Malmesbury's mention of Alfred's translation of the first fifty Psalms, Wülker compares the Prose Psalms of the Paris Psalter to Alfred's method

in the *PC* and finds them likely to be the ones William describes. He rejects Alfred's authorship of the "Proverbs of Alfred" due to their lateness. He treats *OEGD* and the *ASC* as works arranged but not done by Alfred, and notes that Cockayne argues that the *Martyrology* was at least in use by Alfred's time if not commissioned by him.

Zimmerman, O. *Über den Verfasser der altenglischen Metren des Boethius* (Greifswald 1882).

Both prose and verse prefaces name Alfred as the author of the *Boethius*; the Cotton copyist worked close enough to Alfred's time to know this to be true. Zimmerman gives detailed examples to show that the Meters are very close renderings of the OE prose, not of the Latin verse. He rejects Wright's argument that if Alfred did the versification, it would be better, comparing the Meters with the metrical preface and epilogue to the *PC*. Where Wright sees errors or disagreement by the versifier with Alfred's prose renderings, Zimmerman sees consistency; where Wright thinks only a different versifier could have failed to turn three of the prose passages corresponding to Latin meters into verse, Zimmerman argues that Alfred chose not to versify the passages but to translate them in a heightened prose style.

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